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MACLEAN'S

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AUG.
31st
2009

COLIN THATCHER SPEAKS

HOW I WAS FRAMED

EXCLUSIVE
After serving
22 years for
the brutal
murder of
his ex-wife,
former
cabinet
minister Colin
Thatcher has
broken his
long silence in
a last attempt
to clear
his name
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ITALIAN SIDESHOW

YOUR STORY REBELLOUSON drove me right, using just the right phrase to describe Italy's prime minister ("The most interesting man in the world," World, Aug. 17). He has a charming expression that amounts to say "Yes, I am enjoying everything." Yet something seemed to be missing from it: his wise glow. You should have shown a recently child beautiful woman in old London. *Kishiko, Edmonton*

I CAN IMAGINE seeing Berlusconi smiling jocularly when his press office points him to the front page of Canada's national magazine, declaring him "the most interesting man in the world." His day made, his reputation glorified, and a personalized thank-you letter is sent to Madonna. Superficiality was once again, and the thousand-thick pages hide from him the voice of a muted emperor. Berlusconi is a complex person driven by the vanity of having an echo-chamber of fanatical women, and of seeing his accomplishments as expressions of masculinity. *Alida Nishi, Toronto*

INTERESTING! More like pathetic. We're talking about a 72-year-old who punches sexual favours from women who are young enough to call him grandpa, someone who changed the laws to protect his own wealth, and who demonstrates greed and egoism as every turn. What's "interesting" is someone who gives no society, no traits from it. Please, let's not perpetuate this man's bad history by calling him interesting! *Pauline Carter, Guelph, Ont.*

SEVERAL BELLOUSON is a rather Canadian man with the criticism. I am guessing that you think the title to be accurate. However, some young innocent may actually believe your smear hypothesis that Berlusconi is "the most interesting in the world." Why give our democracy a corrupt, self-absorbed, greedy and selfless? I wish there was a way that the media could educate the silent billions who are the millions of the dolphin predators, people who are still so naive to reason behind our beloved world. *Sophie Regnier, Saskatoon*

THE ADJECTIVE "interesting" applied to a person should mean something quite different from the way you applied it to Silvio Berlusconi. It should be someone who has travelled widely and absorbed the culture, history and politics of many lands, a person who is honest and uses discretion as the guide for life. There are many such people. Let's hear about them. *Daphne Stevenson, Port Hope, Ont.*



A LOT OF HOT AIR

WE WOULD like Ottawa's government throw millions of dollars at some huge sea-battle fleet in wind power ("Ottawa's big windy gamble," Entertainment, Aug. 17). The price of our power will have to rise substantially to pay for this folly, and the few small floating jobs we have left will migrate to other parts of the world where cheaper power is available. Ottawa could be pursuing more efficient methods of green energy—a clean, smart and ideally a method that wouldn't endanger the seal. *Lois McKinnon, Kitchener, Ont.*

CONGRATULATIONS to Ontario's Minister of Energy George Smitherman for doing great work on the wind farm. People opposed to wind power probably had people who opposed the use of microwave ovens back in

the early 1990s, which would apparently result in a lot of horrible deaths. Anytime there is any scientific gap to be made, you will find people coming up with reasons why we should stop progress. *Rory McInnes, Niagara, Ont.*

ALL THE DATA in your article "Ottawa's big windy gamble" referred to the capability of these coastal lakes. In fact, their performance—like a season and often far below capacity—is miserable. While Denmark, Portugal, Spain and Germany generate tons of wind power, it is because they have the key element: wind. Ottawa does not. *J. T. Knit, Oakville, Ont.*

CUSTOMER'S ALWAYS RIGHT

YOUR ARTICLE "A lost decade of growth" (Business, Aug. 17) opens that Jeff Inman, head of United Life, says the economic problem is caused by consumer around the world becoming more conservative. Nevertheless, Inman and other top business leaders are walking around with their eyes firmly shut so they won't see the real problem, namely that hundreds of millions of consumers in the world have moved overseas by Inman and his colleagues. How can Inman and his fellow geniuses expect the ordinary citizen to buy products, when all the money flowing into his good wages and benefits have been taken away? Furthermore, people who have been taken over must not pay taxes, so governments are also on the brink of bankruptcy. *Edward Hunter, Toronto*

SAVE THE DOLPHINS

THE NEW FILM *The Cove* is about the slaughter of dolphins carried out in a fishery that hides this dark activity from many citizens ("Killing Pillars," Film, Aug. 1). Now why is the European Union focusing on our seal hunt, which no worse for the animals than killing calves for veal, or any other animal? Why call it a barbaric tradition? I think that the well-known news has made our seal hunt an issue and no one wants to back away from it. Paul McCartney would have said that the seal hunt is a very good thing. I would say that the dolphin cull is a very good thing. I would say that the seal hunt is a very good thing. I would say that the seal hunt is a very good thing. *Karen Perry, Kelby*

PENSION TENSION

I WROTE I could share the optimism found in your article "Pension rises to protect our pensioners" (National, Aug. 17) that the federal government will respond quickly to prevent further hardship to victims of Social Security. So far the response from Conservative politicians has been that legislation change is at least two years away. This is in sharp contrast to the U.S. and U.K., where governments have stepped up to protect virtually all the pension income of their Social Security. Under Canadian law, employee pensioners must now compete directly with bondholders for a share of the Social Security. How many more "bondholders of convenience" that benefit foreign investors on the backs of Canadians will it take before the government will act? *Antony March, member, Social Security and Pensioners Protective Committee, Ottawa*

CHANNELLING DON CHERRY

THE MURKINS by Paul Wells ("Why Michael Ignatieff is hard to find these days," Open 16, Aug. 17) are an example of what all Canadian politics. Political reporting and commentary is supposed to be concerned with issues: the what, the why, and the how of government. In Canada, politics has been reduced to a tag-war of self-interest and endless polling who is ahead of whom this week, or makes 21 per cent, 19 times out of 20. It does not matter who the people elect, all elected politicians follow their leaders while being watched by columnists heading their own Cherry shifts. It is only when one takes the time to read international publications that one realizes how shallow, superficial, and irrelevant Canadian politics reporting has become. Democracy is the least when political reporting is tribalized, as that point eloquently are irrelevant. *Andre Carrel, Toronto, B.C.*

NARROWING THE PRICE GAP

AFTER READING "The price is right for it getting close" (From the edition, Aug. 17) I decided to check the price on a recently purchased paperback. The prices on the book were \$26.95 and \$16.95 in Canada—a difference of about 23.5 per cent. But this price was on an order that had been posted over the original price. \$26.95 and in Canada \$15.95 for a difference of only 7.8 per cent. How's that for "narrowing" the price gap? *Malcolm Reid, Kitchener, Ont.*

OUR KIDS NEED MORE HELP

KARL MENDELSSOHN's compelling story "Noether to Jan" (National, Aug. 17) does not adequately consider all the important fac-

tors to ensure that youth with "severe emotional and/or intellectual difficulties" receive the treatment they desperately need. The absence of that "rational facilities effectively someone like a life in an institution" is not correct. There are many excellent residential facilities that effectively treat children with severe problems. Currently only one in seven Canadian children with serious mental health issues actually receive treatment. The fact that Nova Scotia is able to care for 96 per cent of

responsible, and an credit to those who dare to question why their cities have been so degraded by ugly, silent, empty-handed, and unmerciful scribbling on walls and scribbling on glass. *Michael Orlando, Montreal*

HOW TO SPEND \$59,000

YOUR ARTICLE about "The 14 day apocalyptic walking tour" (Society, Aug. 17) of Indochina, which is largely spent on a private jet. But why not spend \$2,000 to do the exact same itinerary, which I did last month, by using a local people in Vietnam, Cambodia and Laos (they would love to have you, and are very friendly), and flying on locally owned airlines. With the same \$59,000, you could purchase malaria tablets for the entire region of Cambodia and Laos, thereby saving the lives of thousands of human beings. *Andrew Ashkenazi, Vancouver*

SUCCESS OF SATIRE

READ TO Scott Brundage has brilliant work of satire regarding Michael Ignatieff, our nation's great chief opponent ("Yes, the peaceful runner is back," Feature, Aug. 17). This is surreal, isn't it? *Chris R. Chapman, Toronto*

I ACTUALLY READ the whole page of Scott Brundage's brilliant work of satire regarding Michael Ignatieff, our nation's great chief opponent ("Yes, the peaceful runner is back," Feature, Aug. 17). This is surreal, isn't it? *Chris R. Chapman, Toronto*

BYRON'S NOTE: Letters continue to pour into Maclean's in response to our story, "5 Years After 'Against Moving Kids'—this one, from 10-year-old Carson Rogers of 31 Catherine, Ont., was particularly persuasive."

in children requiring out of home care because the province is unable (failing) to develop a provincial residential treatment program is a positive step. Ensuring the right to mental health treatment should include being placed in a licensed treatment facility and receiving quality care with a self-sponsored treatment plan, including family contact. Proximity to family is an important consideration, but it is not the only one when making decisions about the youth's best interests. *Peter M. Dudding, Executive Director, Child Welfare League of Canada, Ottawa*

YOU CALL THAT ART?

ON THE ARTICLE "Fighting graffiti, with more graffiti" (National, Aug. 17), an emergency graffiti tagger argues that defacing public property is a necessary prerequisite to acquiring the skills of a legitimate muralist. This sort of spurious reasoning is, to say the least,

in those terms and we'll give him a small kick in the pants with a single box as well. I'm left to wonder if Maclean's has no public relations job, or, perhaps—no as a Canadian public affairs journal. *Everett Brundage, Edmonton*

HARPER BY ANOTHER NAME

MORE OF your article about Michael Ignatieff of old to him as "Iggy" is that case, I think it would be only fair to refer to Stephen Harper as "Huggy." *Randy Griffin, Redway, N.B.*

We welcome readers to submit letters to either *Maclean's* or *Maclean's*, 11th floor, One Mount Pleasant Road, Toronto, Ont. M5T 2T5. Please supply your name, address and daytime telephone number. Letters should be between 180 words, and may be edited for space, style and clarity.



DON AND BETTY DRAPER in *Mad Men*: Anne remembers buying the original *Black+Decker* electric mixer (which she talked about on the show)

I even cooked in my *Mad Men* days



BARBARA ASKEL

Last week was a nostalgic one and all things considered I prefer yesterday's traditions to today's. Mine change, mine style. First, I took in Julia Child. The film biopic of the great American TV cook Julia Child ate in the series. The latter scene brought back my own guilty attempts at being a madame. "You can keep five lobsters in the refrigerator at around 37 degrees for a day or two," Mrs. Child advised as all on PBS—now there's a thought—and after the bell, "freeze the stomachs out with your fingers, twist and discard..."

Something of a shame, I thought, as Marilyn Monroe's Julia Child plagues her knife with the smiling talent, that she and Marjorie Snow couldn't have run, two splendid women working closely—probably on one another as they wrangled for camera positions. On Sun day came the premiere of *Mad Men*'s final season about the rising stars in the early 1960s, when everyone smoked, wore elegant clothes and political correctness was being on the right rather than the left.

Okay I know this stuff. True, as young women we did wear girdles, party belts and stockings as a matter of course rather than

buying them from Frederick's of Hollywood for a giggle. Some respectable people did wear like that now a bit when encountering Jews or "Negroes" and I distinctly remember in 2004 purchasing an original Rubie A Clear, a machine which in the series used to have the pleasant but unpleasant side effect of giving women orgasms. Hello? All I can remember is the manner of putting gel on little body pads and switching on an electric current that made muscles twitch—which, I had to wonder, strikes me as a more civilized way of doing than today's hanging about French-curtain sex in latex. Had I known it was a pleasure machine, I would have used it a much longer.

A crucial ingredient of those times, overlooked by the producers of *Mad Men* who clearly did not grow up female in those decades, was gelatin. My first crush was Doris Gell who lived on the Roosevelt housing estate in Hamilton. Inevitably he was strictly unresponsive. By summer I had switched to a dark Jewish boy from Riverside, an address that acquired serious no sources. I purchased packets of gelatin. I would dip my chinoline in the jelly mixture, dry it on the clothes line outside till it was stiff as a hooped skirt and go for it at the school dance. I would have failed to look like them in season one of *Mad Men*, whose chinolines would have

made her a student at any sock hop and whom she'd ask after "guy!" Monahan would have got her secrets of the springgarden.

By the late sixties, I was making packets of gelatin again, this time for Julia's Orange Box when Coover having my worst as an East Side apartment first in Manhattan. Unlike Amy Adams in the film, I was unable to work my way through volume one of Julia's Mastering the Art of French Cooking. I did manage a small kitchen fire on East 57th Street when a dish cloth too close to the stove intently ignited upon greasing the stove and the vegetables I was reducing in the mirepoix for my *L'Esquisse de l'Art de la Cuisine* (Clayton Cross the streets credibility but Julia said that boiled tongue was "temporarily may be").

Does anyone else remember the Jack LaLanne fitness show in this time? You'd start the morning behind a kitchen which carefully placed in front of the TV set. Jack, wearing a rubber sled with two rolled sleeves and a single size huge biceps and right armers carefully modest with no bumps when down ought to have been a real female, would engage through five girls holding lifts and ask, "Ladies, how you thought about the food you eat?"

Then, you'd go out and buy the gelatin, heavy cream, sweet sugar and cartons of lemon and gelatin. Soberly, God, the time I spent clenching better to Julia's great roaring "You can't have too much butter" and then getting up to fix Jack LaLanne. I held it firmly in the evening, which is why would not have and thought there might be a role for gelatin here too but I never moved.

I enjoy *Mad Men* and I loved the Julia Child.



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**ETHICS
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ANALYTICS**



Colin Thatcher on how he thinks he was wrongfully convicted of his ex-wife's murder, and on his children, his faith and his new book

A CONVERSATION WITH BYRON CHRISTOPHER

ON THE EVENING of Jan. 21, 1981, John Wilson was murdered. And joined and shot in the garage of her Regatta home. It had been three years since the late husband Colin Thatcher—the son of a former Saskatchewan premier and an ex-prominent cabinet minister himself—had filed for divorce, years marked by Wilson's remarriage, an abortion, one custody battle over the three Thatcher children and a previous violent attack on her. Thatcher moved before he died. Wilson had been shot through her kitchen window and wounded in the shoulder. No one was ever charged for it. On May 7, 1984, after a lengthy police investigation, Colin Thatcher was arrested for her murder. The traditional and controversial trial unfolded over the fall of 1984. Although Thatcher has never ceased to proclaim his innocence, he was found guilty, and spent 2½ years in prison. Released on parole in 1986, Thatcher has spent his time working on his ranch near Moose Jaw, Sask., and writing his accounts. *Final Appeal: Anatomy of a Frame* (ICP Press).

In the book, Thatcher goes his version of events into his arrest, avoiding any direct recapitulation of the crime itself, and concentrating on three areas: Primary is what he sees as the Saskatchewan Department of Justice's single-minded pursuit of conviction. It was a determination, Thatcher says, that led Crown prosecutors—against their own official policy on disclosure of evidence, but not then against the law—to keep from his lawyer evidence that tended

to exonerate Thatcher. The department's actions, he writes, added up to a campaign of "unconscionable deceit and litany of lies of omission, much of which would not be known for years, the full extent probably never." Among the informants eventually possessed by the Crown but not passed on to Thatcher and his lawyer for years was a *pathologist* named to the *Regatta Leader* newspaper that included an anonymous accusation to Wilson's murder and even the hint that the letter writer himself was the *Widow's* weapon.

Thatcher is not alone in being outstepped by what he calls the "double jeopardy" aspect of his trial. The jury was instructed it could find him guilty for either murder or Wilson himself or for forcing an accomplice to do it in an open question where either charge, pursued alone, would have succeeded. As some legal observers have noted, does this truly prove guilt beyond a reasonable doubt? *For the evidence itself, especially the lay reader at the trial—a credit card receipt given 18 three days before the murder, apparently bearing Thatcher's signature, and found near the murder scene—Final Appeal offers a wealth of detail and a full-scale assault on the Crown's case, including a claim that the receipt had a different number from Thatcher's actual card.*

Shortly before the book's scheduled release on Sept. 1, a week after his 73rd birthday, Thatcher spoke with *Maclean's* crime reporter Byron Christopher.

Q I guess the obvious question is why the book? A matter of setting the record straight?

A: There have been very few books written about my case. I don't think this is a local, clear-cut case. I don't think it is a case on behalf of the Crown. I decided that I wanted to lay before you what happened. But mostly I wanted to document what the Crown did—the evidence they withheld. I really believe that had we had the evidence that is presented in this book that case would not have survived the preliminary hearing stage. But we didn't, and I am concerned that I won't be able to do it. The jury was instructed it could find him guilty for either murder or Wilson himself or for forcing an accomplice to do it in an open question where either charge, pursued alone, would have succeeded. As some legal observers have noted, does this truly prove guilt beyond a reasonable doubt? *For the evidence itself, especially the lay reader at the trial—a credit card receipt given 18 three days before the murder, apparently bearing Thatcher's signature, and found near the murder scene—Final Appeal offers a wealth of detail and a full-scale assault on the Crown's case, including a claim that the receipt had a different number from Thatcher's actual card.*

Q Did you write the book for money too? A: The profit motive never even occurred to me. Really, one of the things that frustrated me is that on occasions in Regina I have encountered some of those who were involved in my case from the Crown's perspective. Really, the untruths on their faces, they were a lightning rod to me to finish what I started.

in the Edmonton case, because a good portion of the book I wrote some years ago.

Q Since you got out you were writing a book, then there are some that you shouldn't profit from it. Do you have any thought on part of the profits going somewhere else other than you?

A: As a believer in free speech. My article in it they took 20 years from me, if they really think that they have to steal my book, well then, go ahead.

Q How writing this book been a catharsis?

A: I found it very difficult. There were so many times I almost said, I just don't want to do this because there are certain persons in this book when I would be named down for something. I had just a horrible time. I had a terrible time editing it, reading it and coming to write because it was a fun or a pleasant experience. It was just something I felt I had to do. As I said, I wanted to leave behind a record of what actually happened, for nothing else, for my grandchildren and their children as they come along.

Q An Edmonton defense lawyer, David Wilton, has said that you were dealing with double jeopardy. He felt that the multiple choice report was highly prejudicial against you, my tag it "I would the murder of Judy beyond a reasonable doubt."

A: I agree with him 100 per cent. They took two cases that in isolation would never have survived and they rolled them into one and they gave me the choice. Did I do the murder myself, or did I have someone do it? The first one, at least there were some specifics, things they were alleging I did at specific time and circumstance, the second was more specific to react in your direction. The other one was having to face the untruthfulness of a "finding" there were no specifics to deal with. In other words, if you didn't think I did it myself, there was really no evidence that I had had anyone, but the jury had been given the option of "Well, if you just have a bad feeling about this we can convict." When you have to fight a feeling, it's very difficult to mount a defense.

Q Do you think that having a high profile in Saskatchewan helped you or hurt you?

A: As any active politician who goes before the courts, he goes in there with two attitudes against him. I think any of them will tell you that at a very, very difficult because they're already a certain bias built in against you.

Q What is a life like for you now?

A: I have a very laid-back life on the ranch. I do all the jobs a normal rancher does. I spend a lot of time with cattle and I enjoy making my own money. I am working like I always did. I'm enjoying life immensely. I don't like it a great life. I don't know why I ever turned my back out for politics.

Q The public knows you as a politician in a family line of politicians. Did you ever miss

politics?

A: Not at all. At the time I was arrested I was probably finishing out my first term anyway. I never did enjoy politics all that much. In fact, I enjoyed being a cowboy more than I ever enjoyed being a politician. You know even when I was in politics, I was only a part-time politician. I still went home every night and I lived on the ranch. But I don't miss it at all. I enjoy doing what I'm doing right now and wouldn't I change a thing.

Q You turned to God through Ray Henke, who you met at the Regina Correctional Centre. Can you talk about that?

A: That was early on. It certainly changed my life and my attitude. I'm a born again Christian and have been for 20 some years. I don't forget it off the Mount but I certainly will answer the question. I believe in the inherent teachings that are in Scripture.

Q If you didn't have that meeting, what would be happen?

A: Well, I guess I would have been an atheist, I guess.

Q Would you be atheist?

A: Probably. That's a difficult question to answer, but it's very conceivable that's one of the reasons I'm alone.

Q You mention you've held the faith for almost a quarter of a century. Do you just say that or do you "walk the talk"?

A: I think I walk the talk. You know, I'm not loud about it. Like every other Christian, I feel every day, but I do my best and some days I do better than others.

Q Moving into the time you spent in prison, is it fair to say that some of the officials you dealt with were about their job and some were trying to do you in?

A: It's certainly true later on, when I became eligible for parole when I was in maximum security at Folsom (in British Columbia), I had been back to the Prisons and I had seen carefully gone through a section 759 application. I was eligible for parole, but I wanted to be released when I had been for a good number of years and had earned a fair amount of credit for exemplary conduct. I thought I would be going back either parole board and actually on the case relatively quickly. Unfortunately, when I had happened in the personnel had changed. And their attitude was altogether different. And, you know, I think I was definitely shunned by some people out there. I was held for two months, people came to the point I had to leave Folsom. The only way I was ever going to be successful with the parole board was to get out of there and go back to the Prisons. And I had not come back to the Prisons there's no question in my mind I would still be in Folsom today, probably trying to get my first unconvicted absconce.

Q What was the reason you were delayed

a couple of years?

A: I think one of the reasons is that I was put on the workload of a certain, what they call an IPO, that's an institutional parole officer. In all the years in all the parole officers I ever had, I always got along with every single one of them. This one, we had a problem from square one.

Q What has been the reason of your delay when it was writing the book?

A: I think my daughter's reaction sort of summed it up. Her concern, what I finally told her, was, "They wanted you once and they can do something to you again." In other words, I could be set up, or they could do something if I were to write the book. Some of the material that is in there going to put the Department of Justice. The boys said, "Dad, you know what's happened. You've been

WEDDING DAY: Colin and John Thatcher



"I'm still living a productive life. And best of all, I think this is my ultimate revenge: I'm happy."

through it. You do what you want to do." I wouldn't say it was a contest about it.

Q In the beginning of your book, you write, "The selfish neglect of my three children was my major sin. I look back throughout the dark years. No parent could ask for more."

A: By children, they know the truth about the whole case. My sons were with me when I was in prison at home and they're always been for me in prison. They're always been an object in circumstances allowed. And I've always been very, very grateful to them. My oldest son is a pastor. He was in ministry when all this started. He had no more con-

HARPER'S RECOVERY?

The economy's looking up, and so is the PM's approval rating

BY AARON WHERRY • "Ladies and gentlemen," he said, announcing all the passion this week. "I am pleased to formally announce today the creation of the Federal Economic Development Agency for southern Ontario." He held his applause. "Or," Stephen Harper continued, "as it will be known by its short title, FedDev Ontario."

After a few more sentences on this bureaucratic achievement—of the sort that must feel unattainable to a man once so suspicious of government intervention—he reached for the mic with the flourish of an inspirational office poster. "As Winston Churchill once noted," the Prime Minister said, "Difficulties must not be opportunities."

This—on the occasion of an anniversary at Winchester, Ont.—last week—was what may come to be recognized as vintage Harper: simple and unadorned. As usual, but relatively unimpeachable, response to a large problem. A blue head-drap behind him, a small white maple leaf and the words "Attoni Plus" in a large font on either side of his head.

With such stuff has Stephen Harper straddled, somewhat carefully, to master the primary difficulty of the past eight months. Indeed, with the worst economic calamity in a generation looking to be near an end, and after several notable missteps, the Prime Minister seems very ready to have straddled himself again, no small accomplishment for a politician for whom straddling was supposed to be a primary point of appeal.

"There isn't this burning desire, at this point in time, to bring back the Liberals. Harper has the opportunity to win again," says Tim Powers, the Ottawa political consultant who has worked with the Conservative side. "People were voting, generically, in the spring, his delivery. Well, now it's a new game."

Where once he seemed hopeless, Stephen Harper now appears as a reformer. Or at least resilient, if not exactly strategic. "He's car steady in a far more attractive position today than he was in spring," observes Frank Graves, the veteran pollster of EKOS Research. "Look

HARPER may be in a position to assign himself credit for whatever good may come

ing at things today, it's not like the Tories and Harper have engineered that much. They're, frankly, still sort of stuck in the same place, but the story appears to be off Mr. Ignatieff."

And that too is no small feat. Especially for a Prime Minister who should, by various measures, be struggling to conserve any hold on power.

In victory, some 10 months ago, his government was emboldened and his primary opponent demoralized. But within weeks his government was struggling for survival after a maddening partisan attempt to force early would the competition imposed talk of a coalition. That turned, expedited a change in the Liberal leadership, and soon enough Michael Ignatieff was boosting both Liberal poll numbers and fundraising totals. Meanwhile, a coalition Harper promised would not come had arrived, necessitating a federal deficit he told voters he would never run.

Then it all changed again. In late June it was Ignatieff, faced with the choice of fleeing an election or leaving Harper's government alone, who seemed at a loss. The Liberal leader made a number of public demands, most of which he then ignored. Ignatieff and Harper met privately and a bipartisan work group spent weeks to investigate options means to fix employment insurance. Ignatieff claimed a kind of victory, but Harper seemed hardly bothered by the outcome.

The weeks since have been hot and humid and quiet. But in the absence of activity around Ottawa, the economy has seemed to stabilize. Though 45,000 more jobs were lost in July, the unemployment rate remains at 5.6 percent, never having reached the double-digit peaks of the last recession in the early 1990s. Indeed, though Harper and Prime Minister Jim Flaherty were quick to caution caution, due thank of Canada went so far last month as to grant that an escape from recession was imminent.

Meanwhile, slowly but surely, Conservative party poll numbers have crept back. Harper's side now more or less equal with Ignatieff's Liberals. "The fact that the Conservative numbers have generally held up through this downturn is actually quite surprising," says pollster Nik Nanos.

There is at least one important caveat. "The

thing is," adds Nanos, "the general wisdom is that it doesn't matter what you do—if you happen to be an incumbent in a downturn you will get punished." That general wisdom is supported by available evidence. Since 1994, when reliable monthly data began being kept, Statistics Canada numbers show 13 recessions. Of the 12 elections that occurred during or after these downturns, the incumbent party won—and avoided having its majority reduced to a minority—only three times. (The other nine times, the incumbent lost outright, or was reduced to a minority.)

Precedent may be tempered by present circumstance. Graves argues the current downturn is unique in its perception—that where the rate of unemployment used to be the primary driver of confidence or discon-

fidence in a recession, wealthy boomers have made the stock market the greater force this time. "The mild recovery that the Conservatives have experienced has been largely affluent Glen supporters voting from the last election, who defected as they're coming back," Graves says. "And they're coming right out of the Liberals."

According to Nanos, whatever credit Ben Chretien and Paul Martin are due for balancing the budget in the '90s, voters still associate the Conservatives with fiscal management. Owing to strong banks, natural resources and good luck, Canada may be uniquely situated to thrive as the recession's aftermath (see "Our Big Chance," on page 14) and having loudly put billions toward infrastructure spending and bailing out the auto industry, Harper may eventually be in position to assign himself all sorts of credit for whatever good may come.

Whatever Harper's success this particular summer, it is understandably tied to Ignatieff's lack thereof. Though perhaps not quite a political sensation when the House of Commons reconvened for the summer, two months of relative quiet have slowed whatever momentum the Liberal leader had before his awkward onset with the Prime Minister. From a peak of 59 per cent approval in April, just 39 per cent of respondents approved of Ignatieff's

performance in an EKOS poll released last week. His disapproval numbers, meanwhile, have climbed to 38 per cent.

Well-published history may assign credit to who became Ignatieff but not been visible enough this summer—a complaint Harper himself faced when he was leader of the opposition. Ignatieff spent last week touring Atlantic Canada, charming the locals and raising the faithful. At the end of the month, he will gather Liberal MPs for a summer caucus meeting in Sudbury, Ont. And after that will come what initially may be a closely watched visit to China. In the meantime, the party has been busy redefining itself and fundraising—nearly matching the Conservatives dollar-for-dollar in the year's second quarter—and Ignatieff has settled on a chief of staff, close ally Ian Dunlop replacing former MP Paul Zed, who had held the role on a temporary basis.

Based upon the Liberal leader and national campaign chair, against Harper has copied some things of a vision of his summer: "Now have to hear in mind that he's had a few role for a couple of months now because when the House

isn't sitting, he's not doing cabinet period"—and he is not among those who see the Prime Minister in the clear if the economy is indeed on the rebound. "Well, sure, you can argue that," Smith says. "But, on the other hand, Stephen is not the warmest guy in the world. He's not somebody that various sectors of Canadian society gravitate toward."

This is slightly more than partisan conjecture. According to EKOS, while Harper's standing has improved over the summer and 36 per cent now approve of his performance, 47 per cent of Canadians still disapprove. And while a third of Canadians still aren't sure about Ignatieff, only 18 per cent are similarly sure about him as the Prime Minister. But what Conservatives might find most lacking is a credible alternative to Ignatieff—the last image of Ignatieff not being a particularly engaging one. "I think that the Liberals have probably realized as much of a gain in the election as on the leadership

IGNATIEFF'S POPULARITY IS WANING. 'VOTERS ARE THINKING, OK, THE LIBERALS HAVE A NEW LEADER. NOW WHAT?'

front as possible without putting money and policy and more Michael Ignatieff in the wind," Nason says. "A lot of voters are thinking, 'Okay, so the Liberals have a new leader. Now what?'"

Such says answers are forthcoming. Until then, at least, Harper has hope and opportunity.

Though the 11 waiting govt. has inspired public sympathy from both sides, it may not yield a new kind of compromise. Either way, the Prime Minister already indicated an intent to make reforms in the fall. The Conservatives will be due to deliver an other report card on their economic stimulus efforts when the House returns in September. If they survive that, they will also have a chance to table the traditional fall economic update. And while Steven Fletcher, the minister of state for democratic reform, has renewed talk of eliminating the vote subsidy, the Prime Minister's Office says the focus will be on the economy and the government's crime agenda.

"Ministry government eschews the big idea," Power says. "I think what you will see is personal approaches from the Prime Minister. The big idea guys of recent memory—Stephane Dion and Paul Martin—went on hiatus. I don't think the Prime Minister has a desire to self-immolate. I think his strength is not being the advocate of the big idea, but being the steady hand, with some practical approaches, on the ruler of Canada."

On this, the book may already have been written. This spring, Tim Flanagan, the University of Calgary political scientist and author of *Stop Two* (Harper's closest ally), released an expanded edition of *Blip*—the book, his insider's account of the "Gossamer line" to power. "It is an added final chapter," Flanagan says. "The Politics of Survival"—the reflection on the crisis of old money, the damage done to the Prime Minister's reputation and the danger presented by a new one. He publicly cautions Harper to focus on the business of government, combat the party funds and avoid unnecessary passions. But his most trenchant analysis is less a prescription for the future than an observation of the past.

"To stand on a pedestal now, I went through many ups and downs with Stephen. He has never made it easy for himself," Flanagan writes. "But he has powers of recuperation, and those who now predict his demise because the economy is down and because he made some tactical errors shouldn't start writing his epitaph. Just as Stephen found a way to survive against the threat of the coalition, he will find a way to lead Harper's team into the field again." ■

With John Golden

Greetings, fellow cosmopolitans

The Liberal party is tapping a new niche: Canadian expatriates

BY KATE LEMAY • Brian Wild has never been a member of the Liberal Party of Canada, nor has he made any donations. He hasn't even voted for them in an election. So when he recently received a letter from the Liberals at his home in New Haven, Conn., the 37-year-old was surprised. "Are you a second class Canadian?" the envelope blared. The letter inside, signed by Michael Ignatieff, had the message as boldface at the top: "The Canadian Prime Minister is questioning your loyalty. I think he's wrong."

Among Conservatives, Ignatieff's years spent abroad are a favorite point of attack—but the Liberal leader is hoping they'll play better with the expatriate crowd. In a new campaign aimed at Canadian living outside the country, his ploy may be his globe-trotting in hopes of attracting donations. "My own path has taken me across the newspapers of the BBC to the pages of the New York Times, from remote villages in Afghanistan into lecture halls in Paris, Vancouver and Boston," the letter says. Even the satirical *Maclean's* ran a scolding editorial titled "I'm shocked with passion" from a former *Maclean's* editor, Hong Kong, Paris and Sydney. A call to arms to "reignite and amplify these attacks," the letter ends by asking for a donation, to "afflict the balance of power in Ottawa immediately."

Some expats find their homecoming suggests "there's a deal with me," says *The Star*'s Stephanie, a doctoral research assistant at MIT. Like Wild, Stephanie has a strong connection to her home country, and getting mail from home is a treat. But she was left to wonder, why was she selected for the campaign, and how easily did the Liberals get her mailing address? Wild found himself asking these questions, too. "There's no reason [the Liberals] should assume I would give them any money," says Wild, a U.S. graduate of Yale University's department of history, who supports the NDP. The party cannot be reaching out to her, she says, "because I'm an expert."

Some 100,000 Canadians around the globe throughout June and July, the letter is indeed part of a larger strategy aimed at "engaging with the expatriate community," says Kocco Ross, the Liberal party's national director. It's also a response, he says, to the Tories' "personal negative attack" against Ignatieff and, by extension, the "two million Canadians who live and work abroad." Most of those who received the mail-out were people who'd contacted the Liberal party over the years, he says, addresses were also obtained from voters lists of those registered to vote abroad, which are a matter of public record, as well as various other sources.

What it comes to fundraising, Ignatieff's Liberals are doing something right. The party

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ALBERTA'S WILD CARD

Will Alberta's Wildrose Alliance give the Tories a run for their money?

BY NIKOLAS ROEHLER • Within a few years of arriving in Calgary from Lebanese shores decades ago, Said Abdulbaki was working with Sunspede Winery managing such names as Gianni Singh, the widely revered Indian head, and Jonathan "Red Guy" Haldy before crowds. Abdulbaki, in a white, Saudi-style headscarf, answered the name "The Sheikh" and, from the podium, shook his fist at his former opponents. Brian Hart, part of the working dynasty that includes his brother Bert "The Hammer" Hart, swung medicine balls into Abdulbaki's stomach in the family's basement, sending him for his own occasional hit in the ring.

Now Abdulbaki owns his Blue Time restaurant, at Calgary's gritty Finesse Lane hotel, as the unofficial headquarters of the Calgary-Montrose Wildrose Alliance constituency association, of which he is president. Once a Tory, Abdulbaki left that party in disgust last year to run in the provincial election for the Wildrose Alliance, an upstart right-of-centre party that may now be shaking its long-ignored posture to become the great hope of disaffected Progressive Conservatives. "When I was doing the door-knocking some people, they say, 'You're a snake,'" says Abdulbaki, who captured over 30 per cent of the vote. "I said, 'No, I'm not. I'm red.'"

The Wildrose Alliance's rise—timidly endorsed on the outcome of a leadership race, now under way, that will either confirm or dislodge its precursor, Chairman's race (currently the party's official) potential peer pressure disaffection with Premier Ed Stelmach's Tories (40 per cent of Albertans disapproves



THE ALLIANCE'S strongest candidate for leader: Stelmach is as old as Tory rule in Alberta

of Stelmach's performance in a poll this summer. Formed mere weeks before the 2008 provincial elections—its the product of a merger between two protest parties, one of which once ran on MLA to Edmonton—the Wildrose Alliance membership is growing ("it's more than tripled since January," says party president Jeff Callaway), while its impressive fundraising record in recent months has generated heavy media coverage.

Still, Alberta's next election is three years off. And the Wildrose Alliance remains a cousin of the usual. Consider leadership candidate Jeff Callaway, who for eight years has made his living selling his book, *For Canada* (Dr. Lee Hs, a political manifesto, does to doer available by mail order for \$39.95). "I'm a colorful guy. I've done some things," says Callaway, who in 2006 got involved in a battle at a Calgary gay pride parade while holding a sign reading, "No Pride at Stelmach's Calgary campaign Mark Dymally, another leadership contender, is a focus on the family style social conservative backed by Craig

Chandler, a talented but mildly right-of-centrist politician whose reputation was as a Tory two years ago perceived Stelmach to risk his candidacy. Dymally's politics are just as polarizing. "In Alberta," he says, directing a barb at a challenger, "pro-choice is a left-wing slogan."

And those who are David's Smith (target of the Dymally barb) and Danielle Smith (target of the average candidate, Smith's, at 38, already been a Calgary school board trustee, a national Global TV political commentator and host, a columnist and editorial board member at the Calgary Herald, and, until recently, the provincial director of the Canadian Federation of Independent Business. A long time ago, they are a fiscal conservative but a moderate on social policy. Anybody, not unattractive, and personable, Smiths are well-equipped to transform what's been a raging party living at the margins into a credible alternative to the governing Tories, which seems to be her sales pitch. "There's a discussion we're having right now," she tells Maclean's "Are



JUST WHAT HAPPENED TO THE PUBLIC OPTION

In avoiding Clinton's errors in health care, has Obama made the opposite mistake?

BY LUEZA CH. SAVAGE

It was never going to be a *Canasta*-style single-payer, government-run insurance system, but the congressional Democrats, led by Barack Obama, have for months been pushing their "public option"—an alternative government-run insurance plan as part of the wide-ranging health care reform that is to be the legacy-making policy centerpiece of Obama's first term as president.

The "public option" was supposed to help cover the 45 million uninsured Americans,

and put downward pressure on skyrocketing health care costs by allowing a government entity to negotiate low bulk rates with medical providers and forcing private insurers to compete with a not-for-profit alternative. To some liberal Democrats, it was the heart of the comprehensive health-care reform scheme and offered a first step toward laying down the infrastructure for those who cling to the currently impossible dream of a single-payer system. Given Democratic control of the White House and both houses of Congress, and a projected recession in which legions of Americans are losing their health care insurance along with their jobs, it seemed at the outset like a fortuitous moment to pass the plan—despite objections by the Right. Then, however, it was to become a

"secretive" maneuver of health care

that the month, lawmakers returned to their home districts for the summer break and met with outraged crowd-out town-hall-led up with government bailouts of Wall Street and the auto sector, worried about a government takeover leading to ever-increasing deficits, even real rationing of health care, and the specter, however hyperventilated, of "death panels" of their less-than-welcome dividing whose grandfathers get care and whose don't. With staunch opposition from Republicans, and distance from moderate Democrats who are joining the quest for bipartisan compromise, the public option proposal is now on life support, and the White House shows no sign of trying to save it. As a Saturday town-hall forum in Grand Junction, Colo., Obama downplayed its importance,

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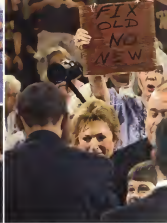
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ROGERS



OBAMA's hands-off approach resulted in many competing health care bills. Getting the amorphous idea has been tricky for lawmakers.



"The public option, whether we have it or we don't have it, is not the enemy of health-care reform. This is just one sliver of it, one aspect of it." On Sunday, Kathleen Sebelius (Obama's secretary of health and human services, appointed CNN) and one of the public option, "Let's not have this be the only focus of the conversation," fueling speculation that the administration had all but abandoned the idea. By Tuesday, the White House spokesman Rob Portman was saying that nothing had changed: that the administration still "supports" the public option but has always been open to other alternatives as well.

How did the public option die so soon?

First, there was Obama's lukewarm commitment. When he ran for president, Obama campaigned as a comprehensive health care reform that would include universal coverage. He did not run on the idea of a public option (a word used by John Edwards, presidential challenger Obama later "broke" congressional Democrats who embraced it). Once in office, Obama had performed a plan that included the public option but at no point did he press for it to veto legislation that did not include it.

Second, there was Obama's tactical gamble as well as not repeating the mistakes of the Clinton administration's health-care reform.

The Clinton run into trouble by working out a complicated health-care reform plan behind closed doors, and then attempting to impose it on Congress, which balked. Obama tried the reverse route: he set out several general principles for reform—covering the uninsured, reducing skyrocketing health care costs, not adding to the deficit—but left the details up to lawmakers to fill in. His largely hands-off approach created two camps: some lawmakers in both the House and Senate crafted several comprehensive bills, some containing contradictory approaches. The leading House bill includes a public option, while the leading Senate bill absolutely does not. Congress was unable to agree on a single approach before leaving town for the August recess, and with bills pending in multiple committees, each one with different factions, the policy idea just became a conspiracy. Lawmakers had to defend the "idea" without knowing what it would actually look like, while critics were able to claim a greenish-old "Obamacare." The White House had lost control of the debate.

And leaving the work to Congress had the effect of empowering small coalitions of conservative Democrats and moderate Republicans, whose votes will be crucial to passing

a final bill, to take a leading role in crafting a compromise—particularly in the Senate, where the Democrats have a slim majority. The reviving of the idea was a surprise on Capitol Hill was but was one for the public option. In the Senate, a senior Democrat on the finance committee, Senator Kent Conrad of North Dakota, declared Friday that there are not the votes to pass a public option, a calculation some Democrats dispute. Instead, he offered an alternative proposal for universal coverage: an alternative proposal for universal coverage "co-ops" that would compete for business with private health insurance companies. They would be run by their members, not by the government.

Conrad has been working with his moderate senators—three Democrats and three Republicans—to craft a bipartisan compromise that can get the Senate. The White House has been especially close contact with the group. The Republicans include Olympia Snowe, a Republican senator from Maine, who said she does not support the public option but would be willing to back a five-year "trial" that would bring in a public option if all states' competition and cost savings were not achieved in time. Such a compromise, if passed by the Senate, could offer House Democrats



RELATED DEBATE: Two opposing views outside a town hall in Alhambra, Calif. (left), support for the single-payer plan in Berkeley, Mass.

a face-saving way out of the stand-off when it comes time to reconcile the House and Sen. are versions of the legislation in the closed-door negotiating process known as conferees. Because the co-operatives would not be governmental, they would be more palatable to Republicans. "You could argue it's more than a face-saver," says Norman Ornstein, a congressional analyst at the conservative American Enterprise Institute. "It's a bridge you think you can cross." "It's the goal to get the public option, per se, but to make sure that insurance companies do what you want them to do, then you can say, 'We have five years and the public option comes down.' And that could have a real impact."

But the shift in the center of gravity from the left-leaning Democratic leadership to the centrist deal makers has spurred a backlash from progressive Democrats and the left wing of the party, who argue that a public option is essential to keeping costs in check, but the House liberal Democrats are demanding that the bill will fall apart without a public option. In July, 39 Democrats sent a letter to Speaker Nancy Pelosi warning to vote against any legislation that does not include a public option. That would be enough for Democratic votes to send the legislation to the House. This week Rep. Anthony Weiner of New York, a Jewish supporter of the public option, and a member of the House energy and commerce committee, announced that a bill without the public option would lose 100 votes in the House.

Outside Capitol Hill, too, what has appeared to be the uncontested triumph of the public option has already left Obama's political camp in a quandary. "It's almost a public health care Medicare, health care reform is not an end for a system in itself," said Robert Reich, a University of California at

PROGRESSIVE DEMOCRATS VOW TO VOTE DOWN A PLAN WITHOUT A PUBLIC OPTION

Berkeley professor and Bill Clinton's former labor secretary. He blamed Obama for its apparent demise. "It's because the White House has never made an explicit commitment to a public option."

Will the progressive Democrats make good on that vow to vote against reform if the final legislation does not include a public option? Will they actually risk handing Obama—and their own party—a major defeat before the 2010 mid-term elections? Probably not, though they can hardly say so at this point as the process without losing a major bargaining chip.

There is plenty of reason for them to leave their party, says one veteran of the Clinton health caucus. "It's because progression to keep the big private rights are great to the extent on this debate," says W.E. Marshall, president of the Progressive Policy Institute, a think tank for moderate Democrats which had a reputation as Bill Clinton's idea mill. Marshall told Obama in private to slow "national

flexibility" on the issue. "The central fallacy is that the public option is the only national reform needed to get universal coverage at an affordable cost. We can get there without it. There isn't an example of ideological passion overriding our very pragmatic view of what reforms can and should accomplish."

Even without a public option, the health care reform legislation stands to include many substantive changes for Americans. Most likely a final bill will address our universal coverage through some combination of a legal requirement for all individuals and most employers to buy health care insurance combined with subsidies for lower-income people paid for by tax cuts on upper-income earners. Tough new regulations would prevent insurance companies from denying coverage to people with pre-existing medical conditions, or from dropping their coverage when they get sick, or from limiting their coverage to the cost of catastrophic illness. There would also be a Health Insurance Exchange, where individuals could compare and choose the most appropriate plan for themselves. The reforms under debate also include a variety of efficiency improvements, from electronic health records to studies on the comparative effectiveness of various treatments to an emphasis on preventive care.

Obama has already made more progress than Clinton did, Marshall says. "I was there in 1994 watching closely, and the insurance industry was leading the charge against the bill—and that's the public option, but they have agreed with many reasonable innovations in the health exchanges, and the strict rules against denying coverage or taking it away on mutual grounds." He adds, "Progressives ought to note that in a heartbeat."

A NEW HOPE FOR AFGHANISTAN

Even if he doesn't win the election, the well-spoken, moderate Abdullah is here to stay BY MICHAEL PETROU

In the weeks following the Sept. 11, 2001, terrorist attacks against the United States, journalists scattered across northern Afghanistan would periodically gather in a mud-walled compound in the small and remote town of Bagram. There, they would meet with a well-dressed, middle-aged man with a well-groomed beard and a close-trimmed black beard.

His English was flawless and devoid of slang or colloquialisms. Years earlier, during the late Soviet Afghan phase, he had been taught English by agents in British MI6. Despite much greater interest in his opinions with the questions thrown at him, his back seemed to stiffen when asked how much the Americans and British were changing the situation they had gathered on the Taliban with the anti-Taliban Northern Alliance, of which he was a member.

"We don't need any advice," he replied. "We know our situation. This international alliance has been striking the Taliban for two weeks. We have been fighting them for years."

The man was Abdullah Abdullah. He was a long-time friend and ally of Ahmad Shah Massoud, the iconic leader of the Northern Alliance known as the Lion of Panjshir, whose reputation and nickname derived from his long and ultimately successful battle to drive the Soviets out of Afghanistan. Massoud, whose puppet government controlled the northern of Afghanistan, was murdered by agents of al-Qaeda posing as journalists two days after September 11, in a shooting, with his body lying in a ditch and his head blown off. The most visible face of the Northern Alliance.

Abdullah had good reason to be cynical about America's new found interest in his country. Only weeks before 9/11, he had been in Washington trying to impress on members of Congress the dangers posed by the Taliban and their links to Osama bin Laden. He got nowhere. Some of those he pleaded with had barely heard of bin Laden.



A long-time Taliban opponent, he promises to reclaim rights Afghan women have lost

Due to American intervention, which is finally coming, brought good fortune for the anti-Taliban Afghan resistance. By December, the Taliban had been driven from power and the newly formed Northern Alliance emerged Kabul. Some veteran Northern Alliance warlords were intent on solidifying their authority. They, after all, had done most of the fighting against the Taliban and kept control of the country was their due.

Others, a younger generation that included Abdullah, wanted to unite with the Pakistanis in the south to form a government with broad legitimacy. Abdullah's faction prevailed. He was chosen as a southern Taliban, was chosen as a leader and then president of Afghanistan's transitional administration. Karzai

was officially elected president in 2004. He appointed Abdullah as his foreign minister.

TOOBY THE RELATIONSHIP between Karzai and Abdullah Abdullah has taken an advanced turn.

Abdullah, who was removed from Karzai's cabinet in March 2005, declared his candidacy for the office of president in Afghanistan's elections this week. Going in to the Aug. 20 vote, he was the only candidate with a realistic chance of defeating Karzai, whose popularity has suffered with the resurgence of the Taliban and allegations of corruption within his government. And if the voting follows the public—which showed Karzai with a clear lead over Abdullah, but short of 50 per cent



Many Afghans blame Karzai for increasing corruption and the return of the Taliban

happen—a second round runoff may be necessary. Abdullah, whose ongoing campaign drew large and enthusiastic crowds in recent weeks, has an outside chance of winning the election. But regardless of the election results, Abdullah has already emerged as a powerful figure on the Afghan scene: a political leader, the first serious challenger to the unpopular Karzai, his face, Abdullah, whose head is now more grey than black, has moderate appeal. He has promised to defend rights Afghan women gained after the fall of the Taliban and to provide economic opportunities for women to rent areas, where they are currently not so much existent. He also says he will fight corruption and decentralize Afghanistan's government by allowing provincial leaders to be directly elected.

However, his biggest issue maybe that he is not Karzai. Almost eight years after it appeared that the Taliban were conclusively defeated, they are once again in the news, and Afghans across the country continue to suffer from poverty and insecurity, and depredation at the hands of corrupt officials. Many blame Karzai, though. Hamid Karzai, one of the world's foremost experts on Afghanistan, says he is not entirely responsible.

"If you are the winner for the first time in Afghanistan on the international community and on American policy in particular, an Afghan talking to you about Afghanistan and to give Karzai the resources that were needed to start rebuilding the country, the troops the reconstruction, the roads, the electricity



AN AFGHAN boy and a standing bull bull herds in a remote area in Paktia province, Afghanistan go to the past Aug. 22

the potential for jobs," he said in an interview with *Al Jazeera*.

"Now, having failed to do this, I think the situation has only got worse because of a lack of leadership by Karzai, allowing corruption to increase. But there is a reason for that. Why did the drug economy take off? Because there is no other economy. Why did corruption increase? Because people have to make a living with the lack of jobs."

Karzai's challenge is that even if he is not solely to blame for Afghanistan's lack of progress during his presidency, it is difficult to credibly promise change to a movement and Karzai has barely tried.

"He is not giving any hint or suggestion that he would do things differently, and that is what people are looking for," says Rashid.

According to Larry Goodson, a professor of Middle East studies at the U.S. Army War College, the lack of progress, combined with corruption and the perception that he is a self-interest United States, has made Karzai's success only ever target for Taliban propaganda. Karzai has secured cash from the United States

and numerous warlords, including Ahmad Shah Massoud, and Uzbek warlord Abdul Kader Dostan, a man who has been credibly accused of overseeing the murder of up to 2,000 Taliban prisoners in 2001. These regional power brokers may be able to deliver votes, but Karzai's reliance on them makes him appear glibly and weak in the past.

Karzai also wanted Abdullah to be his running mate. According to Rashid, who knows both men well, Abdullah declined precisely because Karzai gave no indication that he was willing to change.

Abdullah's campaign was more successful than most observers could have predicted months ago. He walked hard to reach out to poor Afghans, visiting remote areas of the country that are usually ignored by Kabul's elite. But he, too, faced barriers to success. Primary among these is his ethnicity. Despite the fact that he is a Pashtun, with roots in Kandahar, because of his long history with the Northern Alliance and close ties to Ahmad Shah Massoud, in the eyes of most Afghans Abdullah is Tajik. According to Rashid, Afghanistan's Pashtuns may not be ready for a Tajik president.

Regardless of the election results, as clear as Abdullah will not fade from Afghanistan's political scene. Even Karzai has acknowledged that Abdullah cannot be ignored or ignored. Karzai has promised to offer his rival a job in his government should he win.

Arguably, however, what matters most is not the election results, but that they are seen as legitimate and representative. "This is a new thing, given the violent corruption and the weak security situation that characteristically reduced voter turnout—especially in the Pashtun areas where the insurgency is most severe. The Taliban stepped up its attack on the day leading up to the election, while the BBC discovered that thousands of voting centers were left for sale. Tribal leaders have also reported being held at gunpoint in exchange for their endorsements."

"It's going to be difficult to have an election that's prime," says Michael Witzmann, a former Afghanistan analyst at the U.S. State Department who is now a scholar-in-residence at the Middle East Institute. He spoke to *Al Jazeera* in Kabul, where he observes the election process on behalf of Democracy International. "But there's a sense of effort on the part of local and international observers to keep people on their toes to avoid some of the more outrageous attempts to fix the process."

The next step will come when preliminary results are announced on Sept. 5, followed by formal results two weeks after that. Political groups have rarely been this calm. For this reason, prepared peacefully in Afghanistan. What happens then, the election may be considered a moderate success. ■



A CHANGING MISSION in Afghanistan: Chancellor Angela Merkel visiting troops in April

GERMANY GETS TOUGH

In a break with the postwar past, German troops step into combat

BY KATIE EMBELHART • It's like "war" but not as much as it seems. Instead, the German government refers to its "substitution mission" in northern Afghanistan. And because there are 1,000 German soldiers stationed there, provided from among the word "attack." It was not only to speak of the "use of force" but also to "aggravate" the situation. "It's a new thing," says a German newspaper—most enough to indicate that the mission that officials are too shocked to call a war is starting to look like just that.

The German government is officially revising its rules of engagement in Afghanistan—allowing themselves to take a more offensive combat role. "The major change," explains Christian Leuchter, associate professor at the Royal Military College of Canada, "is that Germans no longer have to wait to be fired upon before they can fight back." Until recently, German forces in Afghanistan could not retaliate offensively. They could not take prisoners or pursue a general assault, or even pursue fleeing rebels. Effectively, they had to wait until they came under attack. Another change addresses rebel weapons. German troops should now be free to fire on enemies. "United Nations—stop, it's all fire" was the official call to be used first in

English, then Pashto, and then Dari. Now, those rules have been changed to let soldiers return fire—and give warnings later. "The mission might seem policy, but they really had a meaningful shift. After the Second World War, explains Leuchter, there was a specific reason about Germans taking too aggressive action in world affairs, and the Bundeswehr was limited to defensive operations. It was only in 1994 that the military was permitted to deploy troops abroad—and even then, only in multilateral, UN-backed non-combat operations. In the context of Afghanistan, this directly resulted in a series of national "concessions" special limitations on Germany's participation in the NATO-led mission. But in these are stripped away, Germany has begun to conduct some military attacks.

At the end of July, officials announced that a major new offensive against the Taliban would be launched by over 100 German soldiers—their biggest operation yet in the country. The coalition marks Germany's first military offensive in the Second World War, a benchmark that has not been overlooked. "Some are angry, while others seem almost

relieved," the news magazine *Der Spiegel* proclaimed. "But they all agree that a psychological threshold has been crossed." Until now, argues Markus Kain of the German Institute for International and Security Affairs in Berlin, Germans have operated in a "post-war" society, where "substitutability" and displays of military pride are frowned upon. There have been "no photos of people striding on the street when fallen soldiers return home," he explains. Then plans to build a new school for dead soldiers, he says, are controversial. But that is drifting, too. Last month, Chancellor Angela Merkel gave out the country's first bravery medals since 1945—to four soldiers who fought in Afghanistan.

"Psychological threshold" aside, it's clear the changes are, in part, a result of shifting conditions on the ground. The German-controlled north has continually seen less insurgent activity. But Leuchter insists that "the threat environment is changing." Pressure from NATO forces in the south has pushed insurgents up. And foreign fighters are making it. The real question may be how the deaths of three German soldiers in June that some argue could have been prevented if soldiers had been allowed to take offense against them. Now, in addition to giving troops more flexibility on the ground, the change will reflect them of what some say is a commitment to association for ending a "justice."

Already in May, changes against a German soldier who killed three Afghan civilians in 2008 when they did not stop at a checkpoint were dropped. His lawyer says that a legal process that they wouldn't be afraid to defend themselves if need be.

For all the talk of a newly aggressive Germany, about 70 percent of Germans oppose the war, but, says Leuchter, who nonetheless says the changes, the fact remains that for years NATO allies have accused Germany of passively "shifting responsibility" in Afghanistan's low-level terrorism. Ultimately, Karzai thinks that the real change comes from a better understanding of the Afghan mission. People thought we were "in Afghanistan with little goals in school," he says, "but that's not the UN mandate. The UN mandate is about providing security." Seven years after starting the mission, he says, publically and privately—though they're unlikely to start using the word "war" or "place of substitution mission." ■

SWITZERLAND: AN ANSWER TO THEIR PRAYERS

Since the late 19th century, Roman Catholics in two months in Swiss towns have been praying for a new big glacier to melt, thereby it for flooding their villages. Thanks to divine intervention, or maybe global warming, their prayers were finally answered: the glacier it seems, has almost completely melted. The melted in the region are now asking the Vatican for a chance to pray for a climate change to slow down so that they may move off drought.





WAZZING: charging your hybrid car for a whole week of driving just amounts—for a total cost of only \$4

The race for the perfect battery

Cheap electric cars are almost here—if these claims are true

BY STEPHANIE FINKLAT • I imagine your daily commute in the age of the electric car, on Monday, you charge your car at midnight by plugging it into your garage outlet. The total cost comes to about \$4. The charge lasts the whole week, and still handles a 200 km drive to the cottage on the weekend. You've long forgotten about the frustration of seeing gas prices, and the luckier a younger car is the one of the cheapest on the market.

That's the promise, at least, being held out by a new array of battery manufacturers. Thanks to a sudden surge in research funds—including US\$2.4 billion in stimulus grants for the electric vehicle industry just announced by U.S. President Barack Obama, and a \$16.7 million investment in battery research announced by Ontario Premier Dalton McGuinty—new developments are happening at a heady pace. This has led to a spate of amazing new battery claims from a handful of bleeding-edge start-ups. But are they credible? Venture capitalists familiar with the field say a little skepticism may be wise.

Some of the claims are extraordinary. There's the "Ultabattery," which Australian company CBRD says requires a 4-hour exposure with a half-and-half battery and costs 70 per cent less than current hybrid battery systems. There's Oregon-based Next Atom's new CNT Bat-

tery technology, which the company says can power cars for up to 600 km per charge—six times as far as the average electric vehicle can afford now. Then there's the promisingly named American ultracaps, now recently announced by EESet, an eight-year-old company based in Cedar Park, Texas (which has an exclusive contract with Toyota-based Lexus Motor to supply car-to-land passenger cars). The device has no hazardous materials, and EESet says it holds several times the energy of lithium-ion batteries (which are used to power hybrid cars right now), while charging in charge for months.

All of these technologies sound revolutionary, but there's one problem: none of them have been proven to be commercially viable yet. "Most of the claims that are pushing the edge of reality are probably not true," says Tim Woodward, an investor at Nth Power, a venture capital firm based in San Francisco. "There's a long history of battery engineers being motivated by an unbelievable performance." Woodward says that the majority of data provided by battery start-ups is conducted under optimal conditions making it difficult to tell how far from fiction these new claims for charge time, cycle life or range—and often even safety hazards—incurred by the volatile chemical ingredients.

For example, many companies claim their battery will charge at midnight. While that may be true—technically. But so do most typical car models, need a power supply able to provide 500 kilowatt hours, far beyond the cap-

acity of a regular electrical outlet. "You can't find that kind of power anywhere," explains Jeff Doherty, a leading Canadian lithium battery researcher out of Dalhousie University. "Being able to charge rapidly is problematic for battery-based vehicles."

And while many start-ups dream of making it rich with a technological breakthrough, experts warn that some of those companies may be a bit naive about how the industry works. Car manufacturers will almost always purchase only from established partners, and several co-operative agreements are already in place between car companies and battery technology suppliers, such as those between Toyota and Panasonic, Volkswagen and Samsung, and Bosch and Sunwax.

On top of that is the cost factor. Even if a claim is true, if it costs \$10,000 per battery to manufacture them, they're a non-starter. "You have to look at who the customers are—the auto companies—who are very, very good at driving costs down and forcing their suppliers to take a deal with very, very low margins," says David Berlowitz, a partner at Vancouver venture capitalist firm Nexus West Management. "In my view, that's what the game is," he says. "It's not about creating a new, totally better battery; it's more about who will have the cheapest product."

A report conducted by the Boston Consulting Group (BCG), a global management consulting firm, also paid to consult as the deciding factor, said, in fact, a potential Achilles' heel for the whole electric car industry. It concluded that the costs of creating an entire new market, driven by electric and hybrid cars, are "prohibitively high," at least in the foreseeable future.

The authors admit the playing field could change if there are true breakthroughs affecting the cost and safety of batteries—and indeed such a breakthrough may take place. But a more realistic scenario is one that sees government subsidies slowly pushing down costs. Only the mild electric can be an economically attractive option for consumers.

"The hybrid is a nice technology for the interim," says Doherty, who believes that the rising costs of gas will slowly encourage a shift to electric cars. But, "I do think you're going to see charging electric cars in a few decades, not like a gas tank—I think that's a pipe dream." ■

POWERFUL WORDS FROM OUR ABORIGINAL YOUTH.

As a Canadian leader in Corporate Social Responsibility, we're committed to helping young Aboriginal Canadians explore their creativity and share stories about our country. That's why we proudly support the Division Institute's 5th Annual Canadian Aboriginal Writing Challenge—a national program that encourages young Aboriginal Canadians to contribute stories about defining moments in Aboriginal history. We're proud to announce Howard Adler (left) from Ottawa, ON (Las des Mille Lac) and Trevor Jang (right) from Victoria, BC (We'kwet'wax) as this year's winners. Our support for the Division Institute is one of the reasons why Enbridge was named one of the 50 Best Corporate Citizens in Canada. To read the 2005 submissions, visit www.enr-story.ca



Our first 60 years



STYLING: GUY/STY

THE COOLING CURE

A new cardiac arrest treatment all but raises the dead. Why isn't it used more?

BY RALPH KRAUSS • Medical whiz Ben Long held that when meeting cardiac arrest, speed is of the essence. "The shunting in our blue artery was that when blood flow stops, the chance of resuscitation is very low and can only be done if a patient is aggressively treated within several minutes," explains Dr. Benjamin Abella, clinical research director at the University of Pennsylvania's Center for Resuscitation Science. But what if what we actually need is to slow things down? Abella's work shifts from a traditional focus on time against the less-explored terrain of hypothermia. He and his partners are pioneering the use of "therapeutic hypothermia," the controlled cooling of cardiac arrest patients to 32-34°C, so slow hearts and save lives.

Dr. Dave Waters, a cardiovascular surgeon in Den Helder, Iowa, was among the first to witness how useful hypothermia can be. Fifteen years ago, a man who had fallen through the ice was brought into his ER. "He met all the criteria for being dead," Waters says, no heartbeat, no spontaneous respiration, no blood pressure, and presumably no brain activity. But, although the patient had been without a heartbeat for an hour or two, he wasn't dead at all. The case was remarkable, says Waters, because it demonstrated, albeit accidentally, "the power of the cold."

It's that force—the cold—that Abella's team has harnessed. Old concepts of medicine looked at how people "died" linear or five minutes after their hearts stopped. And it turns out that some cells do die at that time. But many more live. According to Abella, what kills is actually the rapid warming of the heart once circulation and then doses of epinephrine. "The sudden rush of blood back to the tissue is actually very injurious," he explains. First, the flood of blood can make the massive organs go "haywire," causing full-body inflammation. The damage continues at the level of molecules. The way "post-mortem" organisms, believing the cell to be damaged, initiate a process of "apoptosis," or self-destruction. And so the very thing that patients need most—oxygen—ends up killing them.

Dr. Lance Becker, director of the Center for Resuscitation Science, says cool, useful to hold with CPR inside the frozen, cooled that local paralysis. "We don't turn [the person]



HOSPITALS in Europe have been cooling for years. But Canada has been slower.



into an ice cube," he says. But a few degrees cooler is enough to slow the cells' oxygen uptake and prevent intracellular swelling. He wants it to be easy. "We have one [therapeutic] way of doing it," Becker concludes. But, Abella adds, "the many things to control when it's used, and some are not understood fully yet." Both have seen many patients who were "technically dead" for 15 or 20 minutes "return to normal lives after being cooled."



ALMOST AS GOOD AS AN INVISIBILITY CLOAK

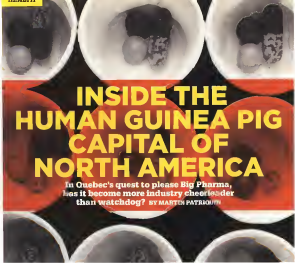
One day, when an earthquake hit, while buildings were being destroyed, a group of scientists at the University of Utah made a discovery. They had developed a device that generates electromagnetic fields that shield objects from radar waves. The device might also ward off the more destructive fire and seismic waves of earthquakes. They do, however, have a way to go. So far, the biggest object they've shielded is a 2.5-cm-wide cylinder.

But ten years after the American Heart Association endorsed cooling, there are still kinks to be worked out. First, there's no set protocol for how to cool. While some hospitals lead the way with cooling catheters or external wrap devices, others work with, let's call it, bags of ice. There's also the issue of time. The sooner the body can be cooled, the better, but the process can take hours. That's why Becker is working on a cooling "slurry" that could be injected right into the blood stream. "Do you have 9-Eleven in Canada?" he asks. "Have you ever got a slurry? This is a bit like that." The fluid contains ice particles that start cooling instantly. And because it's portable, the slurry could be used by paramedics to effect hypothermia at the scene.

Many hospitals, especially in Europe, have been cooling for years. But, for now, hospitals here have been slow to embrace the technique. Dr. Jan Skell, chair of the University of Ottawa's emergency medicine department, estimates that while it's more popular than it used to be, "less than a quarter [of Canadian hospitals] have a formal protocol" for cooling. And he says the U.S. is "moving away from the war." That sluggishness is "normal," says Abella, "considering how strong the data are in support of hypothermia."

A report in the journal *Circulation* shows hypothermia is in cost-effective in emergency room treatments. And, since it's usually of use in heavily injured. In Canada, survival rates for out-of-hospital cardiac arrest have increased five percent. Becker wonders if hypothermia is so valuable because it's "mobile access." It requires the participation of nurses, ER physicians, cardiologists, neurologists and engineers. Once it's achieved, a hospital is committed to maintaining it. "Hypothermia is a system of care. Unfortunately, many hospitals have not worked it out as a system."

Still, hypothermia's orders seem to be conflicting. "For years, cardiac arrest was synonymous with a death sentence," Abella explains. "That mantra has been changed." The door to laughs is being kept open. He's attempting the impossible: trying to raise the dead. He says, and he's only half joking. ■



The bulk of Project ADON P-304 took place in a large, windowless room located in an equally featureless building in Markham, a working-class neighborhood in the northern part of Montreal. At 6 p.m., the 48 test participants were in their assigned seats facing a glass wall, behind which several red and technical, who work for Montreal-based contract research organization (CRO) Algonquin, and about 10 white lab coats. The test participants—always informed as well as untested, though they currently weren't sitting there for free—behaved as strangers who were forced to socialize. They chatted politely, observed one: their cell phones, read magazines, and sat up to the TV in the corner.

When the technician yelled out "Attention 34," the participants in the plastic bubble around his arm and pointed on his chair number 30 to get up, walked into the laboratory, sat down in a chair and rolled up his sleeve. A technician then applied a tourniquet and

collected three milliliters of blood from a spot just below number 34's right bicep. Number 34—actually a Macdonald's employee paying to the study—will have 36 such extractions over the next three days, during which 89 ml of his blood will be harvested.

Most of the time, he can't shiver, drink water or eat for the hours. His belongings will have been searched for contraband—drugs, coffee, bottled water. He will have a dose of morphine, an anti-nausea drug and the subject of Project ADON P-304, sprayed into his mouth several times a regular nurse. He occupies a 60-by-30-foot room filled with built beds for the 50 other men in the experiment, and given capsules to copewith the itching. He can't extend the technician's alarm horn, when they do his exam present his empty blister pack as evidence that he's not sleeping, or direct of cognition. He can smoke two cigarettes an hour, up to 10 a day, in the smoking room. He has the right to view a DVD or a light.

For his trouble—that is, for playing a small

but essential part in the costly process of getting a new drug onto the generic drug market—Bennett gets a "compensatory indemnity" of \$1,000, tax-free. In 28 days, the mandatory waiting period between studies, he can repeat the process, if he is anything like the serially injured "volunteers" who have made a career out of donating their tissues and bodily fluids for science, he would.

These volunteers are in the right spot for the old line of work. Montreal is the clinical testing capital of North America. It is so thanks to a confluence of favorable factors—comparably low salaries, generous tax breaks from various levels of government, industry-friendly federal laws governing clinical trials, not to mention one of the largest pharmaceutical populations on the continent. The city, according to a recent BPSMG study, is the chief place to research, test and market a drug, and pharmaceutical companies have their most "ready 31 per cent of 'body patient searches' conducted in North America happens in Montreal. Over half of these

was performed for drugs for sale in Europe, where in many cases stricter laws and higher costs make such testing prohibitive.

In Canada, a niche of niche-board drugs that may up arrival rates of test-beds are set to move to the generic market over the next three years, and each one must be tested on human guinea pigs beforehand. There is a licensing industry itself for Quebec's most recent research organizations. Funded by drug companies to recruit volunteers and conduct trials, including Alzheimer's and hepatitis drugs, AmphiPharm and AIDS Pharma Service, the three biggest in the country.

Volunteers of the industry in the Canadian and Quebec governments, in their quest to secure the lucrative clinical testing industry, have become more industry cheerleader than watchdog. Oversight of the industry, they say, is largely arbitrary and dominated in secrecy, compromising the quality of research and endangering the safety of the "volunteers" on which the industry depends. Internal Health Canada documents, newly obtained by *NAC*, show how the government agency was secretly unaware of the extent of a rabies outbreak in 2005 during a test until three months after the fact—when an American scientist called looking for answers. For many "volunteers," the field's lucrative enough to weather the dozens of blood extractions and the often crushing boredom of the drug trials. Some are even willing to be about how healthy they are for the privilege.

QUEBEC HAS A LONG history of courting the pharmaceutical industry. In 1967, the federal government founded BioQuebec, considered Canada's first corporate research organization. It employed about 10 people and was one of the first North American labs to conduct trials on the psychotropic effects of marijuana. In the 1980s, it conducted studies on carcinogenic properties of asbestos in the mid-1980s and cigarette smoke (the early 1980s being said to trigger a successful research project Charles River). Today, the former BioQuebec labs employ 1,600 people and are involved mostly in pre-clinical trials of drugs not yet on the market. "Here in Quebec, it's the kind of work that is known and understood," says Algorithm's CEO André Gaillet. "It's nothing new. It's been established. People are comfortable with it."

Celle, who started Algorithm in the 1970s, now oversees a multi-million dollar enterprise that has grown 400 per cent in the last four years. Not in the availability of able and willing bodies for running much of a secret. In recent years Quebec, the province's business development arm, has "very active to patient population" and "willingness among patients to take part in studies," as well as "better pre-screening techniques that allow for quick subject

recruitment" as an idea such as pharmaceutical companies. The federal and provincial governments sweeten the pot with generous tax holidays and credits—"the most generous in the world," according to Interventions Québec. The results, according to the IPMS study, "Motivate firms from the world for research and development fiscal incentives."

Quebec accounts for over 40 per cent of the country's pharmaceutical output. The 30 largest pharmaceutical companies in the world all have operations in Quebec, and with them have come dozens of generic drug companies, who, like the more brands, require fast, reliable, generic more sales and testing of their wares. The federal government further obliged those companies in 2001, when the clinical trial review period was slashed suddenly. It took half the time for pharmaceutical companies to have their drug tests approved by Health Canada. The change, according to Health Canada officials, allowed the body to speed up the review process for clinical and safety assessment to attract and sustain investment research and development in Canada.

Health Canada's oversight was put to the test in the fall of 2005, when a volunteer with tuberculosis infected 20 people during an AmphiPharm-sponsored study. As internal documents show, Health Canada officials didn't seem to know of the outbreak until they were contacted three months after the fact by David Evans, a reporter for the Bloomberg news agency. Emails exchanged between Health Canada officials, obtained by *NAC*, show how the agency was unable to get information from AmphiPharm and from the reporter himself, who seemed to know more about the outbreak than it did.

In the fall of 2005, AmphiPharm had recruited 20 subjects in a clinical test of BA 247, an experimental immunosuppressant drug produced by Alberta-based InterBio. The test subjects were promised \$6,000 should they finish the five "treatment" series (lasting 11 days over 10 weeks, with the bulk of the payment coming at the end of the trial). Fifteen of the 20 subjects were born outside of Canada, including a man from Haiti who, according to his roommate's account published in a paper from the Bloomberg news

agency, began coughing up blood on the first day of the trial. Though staff were apparently told the volunteers was coughing blood, they kept the subjects in the trial for four more days. The study was then halted and the patient eventually tested positive for tuberculosis, but some 20 people, including 11 AmphiPharm staff, were tested positive for latent tuberculosis.

AmphiPharm informed Health Canada of the single TB case within the mandated 15-day limit following the termination of the study. However, AmphiPharm didn't report the subsequent spread of the disease, nothing in

Health Canada's regulations obliged the company to do so.

Then on Dec. 12, 2005, a media inquiry came in to Health Canada about the spread of tuberculosis at the trial. The request set off a flurry of notes. "Not aware of TB case," wrote David Evans, 11/11/05, manager of Health Canada's Office of Clinical Trials. "Do we have a record of this trial? Did we issue an objection letter? We need something definitive from HC [Health Canada] that we are aware of this trial," wrote a reference senior advisor Jirina Vlk on the same day. "What's [our] role is it to monitor this and ensure compliance? It goes this is what we need to know," Vlk wrote. "What type of actions would we take?" Apparently turned for information, Health Canada officials asked reporter David Evans: "Is there a queue list?" about the tuberculosis outbreak.

According to spokesperson Gary Hobbs, Health Canada launched an investigation

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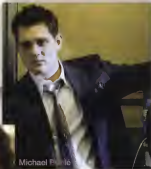
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Toronto's Late Afternoon

ALBUM PHOTOGRAPHY: JEFFREY M. HARRIS



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into the evidence before the clinical trials." It's a guideline, so if you aren't doing the T3 test you aren't actually breaking the law." Part of the problem, Leyside says, is simple disclosure inside the U.S. the Food and Drug Administration points the findings of its inspections on its website. Anyone, prospective volunteers included, can view the history of GCR's Health Canada doesn't disclose its inspection findings. Anyone curious about Anapharm's tuberculosis outbreak, for example, must look. "You should call the company to get more info," is how one Health Canada official

FOR THESE 'VOLUNTEERS,' THE WORK IS LUCRATIVE ENOUGH TO WEATHER THE DOZENS OF BLOOD TESTS. SOME ARE EVEN WILLING TO LIE ABOUT HOW HEALTHY THEY ARE.



not who were implicated in the study." Anapharm's history record revealed the problems, and has changed its policy on T3 testing. "We do all the required testing, and adhere to other rules, when an insurance opportunity is involved," Anapharm's president and CEO Johnna Boucher Champagne told *WashPost*. "This happened in 2005. It's an old story." Perhaps so. Yet apart from a Health Canada list of new binding guidelines suggesting companies should use patients for tuberculosis, little has changed since. "Health Canada didn't change anything. They continued that companies should turn to advertisements when conducting a clinical trial for a drug that suppresses the immune system," says Martin Leyside, director of a clinical trial legal affairs at Ethicon, a CRO. Its non-profit drive, Veritas, was the independent review board that until August 2005 oversaw Anapharm's testing protocols. (According to Health Canada regulations, contract research organizations must have an independent

responded when asked about the number of people involved.

"There's not enough questions about how the industry is inside, as long as you have hot dogs at the other end," says Martin Leyside. He frequently uses words like "broken" and "corrupted" when describing the profession in which he himself works. "There is some for someone to abuse the system and no one would know about it."

OVERSEEING TRIALS is certainly a challenge, one often made more difficult by the volunteers themselves. During a recent visit to an

Algorithm clinical trial, Machel's friend and several participants who drank alcohol and took part in random radiation when both are explicitly forbidden during the testing period. Many of these participants, some who were decades long veterans of the trade, were well-versed in what the company tested for—and what it didn't. "You learn how to say 'no,'" says Anthony (not his real name), joking to Algorithm's quackness over consumption of alcohol and drugs.

Anthony spent the downtime between his confinement and return with celebrating a birthday. He was worried more about the ensuing hangover than about getting nibbled by Algorithm's tests, which would have meant forgoing most of his \$1,000 paycheck. He knows from experience that the company wouldn't test for the booze anything around his system. Other tests in the study were taking prescription medication—even though, like alcohol, doing so might affect Algorithm's study results. "Nobody tests for anything except for illegal drugs, and that's only when you first get here," Anthony says. "Other than that, you can do what you want."

Algorithm's Las Vegas facility defends the integrity of its firm's research, saying people like Anthony are the exception to the rule. "We have rules to follow but we can't enforce all the time," he concedes. "We don't do follow-up tests [for alcohol or drugs]."

Others still blame the media. After all, "no one died," says Jack Cornman, president of 188 Services, the independent review board contracted to review Anapharm's testing for the ill-fated 2005 study. "There is no agenda to do harm to Anapharm and us," Cornman says without elaborating. "I think Health Canada could have done better [but] I think we did everything we could." The clinical testing industry as a whole, Cornman says, has been unfairly tarnished as a result of the T3 outbreak—which he is loathe to even call an outbreak. Tales of outbreaks and half-drunk volunteers are media common. Cornman says, designed to blurt out what is made in Canada success story. "We have highly trained, highly qualified, highly ethical scientists and physicians who conduct world class research in this country. The industry is a success for Canada, and for Montreal." ■

BEER FOR YOUR SOULS

Spanish scientists say grapefruit's cough medicine really does have health benefits. A study of nearly 1,200 women revealed that those who regularly drank beer have stronger bones, making them less susceptible to osteoporosis. The benefit is thought to come from beer's high levels of silicon and phytoestrogens. But no need to go on a bender—those who drink less than a pint a day showed as much benefit as heavier drinkers.

ENOUGH WITH DRINKING WATER

Healthy people don't have to drink nearly as much as they think

BY CARRY CULLIS • When it comes to water, there's nothing clear about how much we need to drink or even what good it does at all. Still, parents naggle 8-oz. glasses a day? There's no scientific proof everyone requires a certain amount should be colorless? That's a sign you've chugged too much? There means you're already dehydrated? Not even close. "I want to quash that notion," says Valentin Valtin, professor of physiology at the Dartmouth Medical School in Hanover, N.H., an expert podiatrist product.



TWO LITRES A DAY? The notion that we need that much water is 'bullshit,' says one expert.

by the American Physiological Society. We should know. It's a national 2002 study. "Urinate at least eight glasses of water a day? Really? Is there scientific evidence for the '8x8'?" is often cited by other researchers investigating how much water we should consume daily. Now, many physiologists are debunking the most common assumption about water intake. Valtin's conclusion: healthy people who live sedentary lifestyles or work in air-conditioned don't have to drink so much.

So how did this belief get so widespread? One theory suggests it was a misinterpretation of the 1980 "recommended dietary allowance" (RDA) data produced by the Institute of Medicine, says Samuel Chertman, principal investigator at the U.S. Army Research

Institute of Environmental Medicine. These stated that for every calorie expended, one milliliter of fluid was to be consumed. Assume an average body burns 2,000 calories a day, which would require one liter of fluid (or 3.38 U.S. gallons).

The recommendations "never said that was what everyone required," says Chertman, but people just "looked at 'Over the last 100,000 years, there has been a major climate change' in our atmosphere with good hydration, adds Mark Knepper, chief of the kidney and electrolyte metabolism lab at the National Institutes of Health in Bethesda, Md.

"Somehow we all survived without carrying around

TOTING WATER AROUND, SAID VALTIN IN HIS STUDY, HAS BECOME AKIN TO A 'SECURITY BLANKET'

and so. There's even water in foods such as chicken and bread, but adds: Rather than slavishly chugging down eight glasses of water, these experts say we should take a more enlightened, individualized approach to hydration. How much we each need depends on factors such as our sex, level of daily physical activity, how hot it is, where we live, our size and even our personal health status. Fortunately, when we need to drink, our bodies send us a signal that's more clear and accurate than any formula there. "When the salt level goes up in your blood, so does your thirst," says Knepper. The most useful way to know the state of your water balance, he explains, is by taking a sip. "Everyone has had that experience [where] you get some cold water and boy, does that taste good. So you can tell if you need that water by how it tastes when you try it."

Another way to gauge hydration is by our urine color. Valtin suggests it should be a "moderate yellow" like lemonade. But that says that have can be tricky indicators because urine color can be affected by what we consume. Melts vitamins, for instance, can make it golden. Chertman says that the first urination of the day can be quite accurate. "Through Mouth-to-hell, colorless urine signals that you're drinking more water than you need," says Knepper. Over hydration isn't usually a problem unless you're under extreme stress. Like a soldier or a marathon runner in high temperatures. Under normal circumstances, when we've consumed too much water, an antidiuretic hormone in our bodies called vasopressin goes down. And falls, the kidneys excrete the water and we relieve ourselves. But in rare and extremely unusual situations, vasopressin can get inappropriately high, even as a person drinks plenty of water. The body holds onto the excess fluid, which dilutes the salt in our blood. "So you keep filling the tub, but you don't open the drain to let the water out," says Knepper. In the worst cases, this turns into hyponatremia, which causes swelling in the brain, and can actually kill you.

But for most of us, who are healthy, have easy access to water and food, and don't often face extreme conditions, the risk of over hydration or dehydration is low. Even when we first feel thirsty, we're a long way off from dehydration. That pinched sensation sets in when our blood concentration is about two percent, says Valtin, and diagnostic dehydration doesn't occur until the blood is concentrated at five percent. "So," he says, "there's a big leeway?" ■

Student Survival Guide 2009



You've waited for years and now it's almost here. Your first year of university or college is one of the most exciting times of your life. It can also be overwhelming. You've never had so much freedom – or responsibility. The good news is that there are plenty of resources available to help you cover the rough spots. Everything is there to help you succeed. All you have to do is ask.

So take a deep breath, and let's go to **school!**



PHOTO: GETTY IMAGES/ALAMY

Residence Realities

There are lots of good reasons to live in residence, especially in your first year of university. For starters, you'll meet a lot of interesting new people, some of whom may become good friends. You'll also be trained in school life in a way that living off-campus can't match. The benefits of residence life are so great that some universities require all first-year students to do it.

That's not to say that there isn't a downside. Residence almost always means a lack of privacy, lots of noise – often at odd hours – and the fun of communal showers (note: bring shower shoes!).

Living with a total stranger in a small room can also be a challenge. You'll have to negotiate study schedules, deep tents, housekeeping, and visits from friends and significant others. But the skills you acquire in the process will be useful later.

Here are some tips for getting along with your roommate:

- Start by letting him or her know that you want to get along. Invite your roommate to tell you when you do something that makes him or her uncomfortable. Then ask if it's cool for you to do the same.
- Try negotiating a 'contract' that covers things like quiet time (for study and sleep) and uses from "special" friends.



- Respect one another's differences.
 - Clean up after yourself; this can be a big change, especially if you're used to having your own room. Pick up your dirty clothes, get rid of your garbage and make your bed – even if you just throw a sheet over it.
 - Be respectful: never use your roommate's stuff – including food – without permission. And no matter how much you're tempted, creep through his or her things.
 - Try to resolve conflicts as soon as they arise. If they're allowed to fester, they start to take on a life of their own.
- If you and your roommate (or roommates) have "irreconcilable differences" see the residence advisor.

YOUR ROOM

Forget the glossy full-colour photos of residence rooms you've seen in magazines. Most are small, spartan and boring. It's your job to make the most of the space, keeping in mind that it will be your home away from home for nearly a year. Here's what you need:

- ☐ **Bedding** – pillow, blankets and two sets of extra-long sheets
- ☐ **Towels** – hand and bath.
- ☐ **Computer** – laptop or desktop. It's your choice. Plus anti-virus and anti-theft protection.
- ☐ **Printer/scanner** – or you can usually print stuff at the library.
- ☐ **Television** – this one's iffy, as it's easy to get caught up in "Family Guy" re-runs and forget about that overdue English assignment.
- ☐ **Headphones or an iPod** – helps to avoid late-night arguments about your passion for Swedish hip hop.
- ☐ **A good surge protector**.
- ☐ **An external hard drive** – back things up like your (academic) life depends on it. It does.
- ☐ **A USB flash drive** – essential for storing files and sharing with others.
- ☐ **An energy-efficient desk lamp**.
- ☐ **A good alarm clock** – loud enough to wake you for those 8 a.m. classes!
- ☐ **A phone** – while you can get a land line, most students prefer a cell. Shop around for a cheap plan.
- ☐ **A plastic storage container** to carry things to the bathroom.

TIP: Remember that most residence space can't be locked. Even if you have insurance, your things are irreplaceable – like your high school grade and previous collection of Star Wars figurines. Act accordingly.

- ☐ **A laundry basket**.
- ☐ **Zip lock bags** – handy for transporting leftovers from campus events, the cafeteria, etc.
- ☐ **Posters and knick-knacks** give the place a homey feel. But don't embarrass yourself with old WWF memorabilia or a James Brothers poster.



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TIP: Most universities provide workshops designed to help you become a better student. Typical offerings include "note taking", "essay writing" and "preparing for exams." Find out what your school offers and take advantage of it.

If that doesn't work, a remedial process is usually available through the residence. If worst comes to worst, you can request a change of rooms.

However, residences are usually limited, so relocating may not be an option. If all else fails, and you have to spend the year with the roommate from hell, just remember – it will give you some great stories for later.

Keep those grades afloat

Slipping classes and falling behind is one of the major reasons students drop out of first-year university. It's not surprising that they slip – especially those unimpressive 1st in classes. It's probably those first turns away from sagging parents and judgmental principals. And the fact is that, at this level, no one really cares whether or not you go to class.

Unfortunately, you can't succeed without attending class regularly. If you skip, you might miss a pop quiz, important material that will appear on the exam, and/or extra credit for simply showing up (some profs also penalize you for non-attendance). The ultimate consequence of skipping classes can be outright failure or becoming so overwhelmed that you simply give up.

Consistently attending classes unless

something truly important (no, not a hangover) prevents you. Once you're there, participate. Many profs award bonus points to students who contribute to class discussions. And sit near the front where there are fewer distractions – those who sit up front traditionally get the best marks.

Here are some other skills you'll need to succeed:

Get to Know Your Profs

Believe it or not, profs want you to do well. For one thing, it makes them look good. They may seem intimidating but introduce yourself anyway. The fact is that the better a professor knows you, the better your chances of passing the course.

Professors provide extra help by answering questions and tutoring you. And many will be happy to share their passion for their area of expertise. All at no extra charge.

Get Organized

It's easy to become overwhelmed by due dates, meetings and other information in the daily wash of university. Keep track of everything using a planner or some other organization system. And update regularly. Whether it's a day timer or a PDA, it will quickly become your best friend.

Use Your Time Well

Don't procrastinate. Break projects down into smaller, easy-to-achieve chunks and assign deadlines to each chunk. You'll enjoy seeing your progress and it sure beats feeling worried and stressed out all the time.



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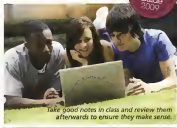


Figure out the time of day that's best for you and tackle your toughest assignments then. Stay fresh by taking regular breaks and reward yourself by doing something you enjoy during them. Just make sure to get back to work when the break is up.

Be "Noteworthy"

Take good notes in class and review them afterwards to ensure they make sense. If you're confused or something is missing, follow up with the prof or another student and revise. And make sure to back up your files regularly.

University is much more demanding than high school and you have to work to succeed. The upside is that by participating and working hard you'll get a lot more from the experience than you would otherwise. And if you run into trouble, get help from the prof, a teacher's assistant or a more senior student. Don't let things slide.

Health & Wellness – eat your vegetables

University life can be very stressful and it's important that you take care of both your physical and psychological well-being. Here are some tips for "stress proofing" yourself:

Eat Well: Okay, maybe not three squares a day, but you shouldn't be living on fast food either. Your body needs fruit and vegetables as well as proteins. Limit salty and sugary foods, sleep with sunroof fans, and drink plenty of water. Watch alcohol consumption, too. Among other things, it's loaded with empty calories.

Exercise: Try to get 30-40 minutes of physical activity at least four times a week. Not only will it help keep you trim, it will also boost your energy – and all those endorphins are great for your mood.

Practice Safe Sex: Enough said.

Sleep: It can be tough to get enough sleep, especially in residence, where friends doze by at all hours. But it's very important to recharge yourself. For most people that means seven to eight hours of zzz time nightly.

Tax saving tips for students

As a student, money is often in short supply so, be sure you are taking full advantage of the tax system to maximize the cash in your years. Here are my five top tax tips for students:

1 Claim your non-refundable tax credits

Non-refundable tax credits come in many forms – tuition, textbooks, interest passes, student loan interest, or the new Canadian Employment Amount. Apply these against taxes owing on your part-time or summer income, and you could save big.

2 That scholarship you worked so hard for? It's tax-free!

The tax rules permit the full exemption of scholarships, fellowships, bursaries, study grants, and artistic project grants. (Provided your program meets you to the education tax credit)

3 Report only the EAP portion of RESP withdrawals

Only the Educational Assistance Payments (EAPs) from your RESP are taxable. EAPs consist of the income, growth, or Canada Education Savings Grants paid out to you from your RESP. Any contributions refunded to you are tax-free.

Plus, you can now receive EAPs for up to six months after you graduate.

4 Claim moving expenses!

Did you move home (more than 40 km) for a summer job? If so, deduct moving costs against your employment income.

5 Consider a Tax-Free Savings Account (TFSA)

Profitable summer? Stash up to \$5,000 tax free in a TFSA. You can access your funds whenever you want, for any reason, and you can recontribute any money you withdraw the following year.

James Galloway, CMA, CFP, CFP® 101 is a Vice President, Tax & Estate Planning with CIBC Private Wealth Management in Toronto.



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Seeing kids off for their first year of university is an emotional roller coaster ride for most parents. On one hand you're happy and excited for them as they prepare to take off on their own. On the other, it's hard to let go.

Mental Health

Research shows that depression is the number one reason students quit school in their first year. Everyone has "blue" days but if you find that you're sleeping for more than normal, crying a lot, or feeling hopeless, you need help. Every university has a counselling department staffed by caring professionals who offer confidential, non-judgmental assistance. Don't wait.

Keep track of your coin

Money problems are a big reason why university students drop out of first year or fail to return for second. A university education is very expensive and even if your parents are footing the bill, you still need to be smart with money. Here are some things to keep in mind:

Keep track of your money: If you've never had a budget before, start now. Determine your income and expenses. (Hopefully, the former exceeds the latter.) Then figure out how much you have to

spend each week. Write down your expenses as you go and, at the end of the week, see how you've done. If you have money left over, hank it, don't blow it. It's sure to come in handy down the road.

Investigate alternative sources of funding, such as scholarships and bursaries: The latter are based on need, not academic achievement.

Avoid credit card debt: The average credit card debt of college grads is frightening. If you get a card, use it only for necessities and pay the balance in full each month to avoid interest charges.

Watch the splurges: Avoid eating out when you have a meal plan or buying things you don't need, like that new purse or PlayStation®.

P.S. Mom & Dad!

Seeing kids off for their first year of university is an emotional roller coaster ride for most parents. On one hand you're happy and excited for them as they prepare to take off on their own. On the other, it's hard to let go.

As difficult as it may be, parents need to make a balance, providing love and support without smothering. Don't be a "helicopter" parent, hovering over and swooping in whenever there's a problem. Part of the education involves learning how to figure things out — everything from finding the way around campus to questioning a prof about a failing grade.

Maintain regular contact with your child but don't pester. Let your child know that he or she can call any time, particularly when she's feeling overwhelmed or homesick. And keep your contact positive, encourage talk about what she's enjoying about school, and celebrate the successes.

Finally, remember that this marks an exciting new chapter in your life, too. It's an opportunity to spend your own wings and explore the things you never had time for before. Enjoy! ■



BALANCE IS KEY

The Digital Trap

Having your computer and cell phone on while you're studying is a siren for interruptions. Turn off the phone and leave Facebook, YouTube and all videogames until your work is finished. Otherwise you might never start.

Too Much Socializing

One of the most exciting aspects of first-year university is all those parties. (You didn't think that movie like "Animal House" and "Old School" were completely fictitious, did you?) No one expects you to stay in your room studying for the next four years. But try to strike a balance between socializing and schoolwork. Work hard and play hard — preferably in that order.

Not Enough Socializing

If you're shy and homesick, there's a temptation to stay on the sidelines. Fight it. Get involved by approaching someone who is sitting alone in the cafeteria. Join a club that interests you or get involved in a sport. You'll not only meet people, but it will be good for you physically and psychologically as well.



IN PRAISE OF DEAD-END JOBS

Is a low-status job the most important work experience of all?

BY STEPHANIE FORDALE • Peter Kranner, a non-American psychiatrist, bestselling author, and faculty member of Brown University. Before he became a clinical professor of psychiatry there, he was also a stock boy in a farm store, picked fruits and vegetables at a farm, and delivered mail for the U.S. postal service. His most memorable job, though, was the one he had as a cashier boy in a town club — a job that he says taught him humility. "I learned how many hours a day I could smile, and how demanding people were," he says. "I would read Don Quixote for a couple of minutes before going back to find out I haven't put enough sugar in the lemonade or made the rice too watery the last time."

Kranner wrote recently in the *Wall Street Journal* about how jobs can set us on a kind of thermostat and help people learn about their strengths and weaknesses. If that's true, few may provide more lessons than the dead-end job. Kranner says that he taught him "how you get along with unfriendly people in a master-servant relationship" — a useful skill for anyone who may one day have a difficult boss.

Like Kranner, young workers affected by today's job market may find that their time as a dead-end job is the defining work experience of their career. "I often see set people when they've lost their jobs or have been underemployed or dismissed," says Kranner. "It's very disturbing for them." With marriage and parenthood often deferred in today's world, he says, we've become accustomed to judging our personal worth by our jobs. Young workers who find their identities suddenly compromised by low-paying, low-status jobs may get a valuable lesson: Don't derive all of your self-worth from your work.

Marlene Delahaye, a senior consultant at Career Solutions in Vancouver says that often new graduates underestimate skills they've learned on the job as an office environment. But stress in dead-end jobs can confer the kind of self-awareness that benefits us in the long run. "Swearing blood in a pulp mill at age 17 certainly made me realize the limits of education," says Bill McMillan, director of Master Lease Management Ltd., a Calgary investment firm. But his more valuable lesson, he says, was learning he "liked dealing with people." "I always thought I'd be more inclined to pursue an academic career," he says. But what he

craved in all his dead-end positions (the slow-paced fielding newspapers) and in a grocery store clerk, was meeting people. "That's what really made me get up in the morning."

What you perceive as a failure or setback can also boost your CV. "Employers will see they look for McDonald's as a success," says Len Bland, a senior vice-president and "chief people officer" for McDonald's Canada. "They

notice Lapointe's Steadfast & Griffin. Lapointe, Oct. She now admits being frazzled and thinking, "I have two degrees and I'm being yelled at by somebody because their fish is cold." She's now smiling for a small firm. She knows the warmth learned by her job. In fact, she says, "I'm better off for it. I've grown fat, and, if I find myself out of work when I'm done smiling, I have something I can fall



SOME EMPLOYED actually look for experience in the service industry when hiring.

back on." And she still writes for Lapointe's once a week for an opinion of cash.

Understanding that a negative experience was a positive one can take months, even years. "I worked at a company for three years — I call them the dark years," says Carol Peterson, an assistant manager for IBM. She recalls the was "unbearable," but years later, that experience has made her genuinely value her current job. "That's a lot for money can buy, but if you go into a job every day when you are miserable it's not worth it."

As for Peterson, he credits his business savvy to his time spent in the restaurant industry. "Dinner, if someone screws a waiter, well, they'll probably screw me," he says. "That's not something you get in an MBA course, but that's a life lesson." ■



NEPAL: PAYING MEN TO MARRY WIDOWS

"You can't sell your mother?" That was the rallying cry of 200 Nepalese widows who recently demonstrated in Kathmandu, protesting their plight at a government scheme to pay men US\$550 for marrying women whose husbands have died. The initiative is intended to break down social and cultural barriers, but the widows aren't buying. They want jobs and better health care, not government donations.

THE BACK PAGES

music

What's the
most fun city?
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WHAT HAPPENED TO QUENTIN TARANTINO?

The director of 'Pulp Fiction' and 'Kill Bill' once epitomized the future of moviemaking. Now he seems out of date. BY JAIME J. WEINMAN



In Quentin Tarantino's old days, there's a question you'd never have heard of 15 years ago, when *Pulp Fiction* made him arguably the most famous and influential actor-indie auteur in America. But his new movie, the second *World War II* adventure *Inglorious Bastards* (opening Aug. 31), has the usually cocky Tarantino sounding insecure. Sebastian Haskelbeck, founder of the Quentin Tarantino Archives website, told *Max* that an important part of Tarantino's persona is "a person's self confidence in what he does," but for once, Tarantino's confidence in the film he made in the last 10 years "seemed to have a momentary lapse." He said, "Still, he wouldn't say that *Bastards* would be a, only that "this was the hardest movie I've ever made." (He also has also made some self-promotional comments that sound more like the brilliant, eloquent words poured from the *Viva La Diva* interview that he refuses to let his own poster because he doesn't want a cartoon "looking like a drawing to cover my name." But he's obviously acting like some one who doesn't want more history to pass him by. Others think it already has. Gerald Peary, a critic who adored a book of interviews with Tarantino, now says, "I don't find him

as significant a cultural icon" as he was in the *Pulp Fiction* days. Audiences don't always know what to make of *Inglorious Bastards*, the film got a mixed reception at the Cannes Festival (where *Pulp Fiction* took the top prize in 1994), and even favorable reviews warn that it's not the rekindling of a passion we'd expect from the trailer *Inglorious Bastards* has all the things we've come to expect from Tarantino: bloody, but comical, violence, self-comedy in inappropriate places, very funny, but for revenge (Mia Wallace is a Jew who wants to destroy the Nazis in *revenge* for killing her family). But it also has surprisingly little action for a movie about raging Nazi-killing who rule their victims' souls, two-way scenes, the opening and closing one in a Paris tavern, most of the scenes of dialogue, followed by a few seconds of violence. And up-billed *Dead Bill*, who plays the head Nazi hunter, doesn't have much screen time in the movie; his character doesn't really drive the plot compared to the relatively unknown Christoph Waltz, who plays a charming but ruthless Nazi officer.

The most surprising thing about *Inglorious Bastards* is that for a director who used to epitomize the future of moviemaking, Tarantino now seems like an Old Hollywood director. When *Pulp Fiction* used a series of time jumps, making one hour's story tell the same for independent filmmakers, *Inglorious Bastards* tells its story about two different groups of people plotting to destroy a movie theater about high-ranking Nazis are attending a premiere, in every hour's way. And while Tarantino used to be considered a loose, fast-paced filmmaker, much of his work is extremely paced, with mostly scenes work and carefully composed shots, fast cutting and slow motion are mostly used for brief scenes of violence. If you're used to the heavy cutting of modern blockbusters, or the camera tricks of last year's big Oscar winners, *Inglorious Bastards* is an older type of filmmaking, where the director doesn't show off. For those who find today's movies over-cited, the unlikely approach of *Bastards* may be refreshing. But it's still a sign that Tarantino isn't exactly interested in a lot of the tricks younger filmmakers are using.

Actually, Tarantino's old-fashioned approach isn't that hard to understand when you know so much of his many interviews (more than any other moviemaker). His self-deprecating sense of humor. Tarantino kindly remembers that the first time he met Tarantino, "he came to my class at Boston University and he gave this two-hour impromptu lecture on French film.



BRAD PITT and Al Pacino in the new movie *Inglorious Bastards* (above), Tarantino (left) with characters from his films

about Jerry Lee Lewis and Jean Pierre Melville." Younger filmmakers are influenced by these ideas in more recent films, but Tarantino holds every movie out of his older movies he's seen. *Reservoir Dogs* and *Pulp Fiction* were about gangster movies, not gang wars. *Kill Bill* mixed martial arts movies with the French New Wave.

This constant focus on movies, instead of

THE 'BULES' are 'straightforward.' An infant under one month with a fever of 100.4 or higher sees a doctor. Period. No discussion."

Is this the time you should call 911?

An ER pediatrician helps determine if a sick child needs to be taken to the hospital

BY JULIA ROSENTHAL • Are you afraid that if your child's fever goes through the roof, her brain might boil? "Fever phobia" is a common parental fear, writes Dr. Lara Zibrenson, a new book called *If Your Kid Isn't This Book, Everything Will Still Be Okay: How to Know If Your Child's Injury or Illness Is Emergency*. Zibrenson is an emergency-room pediatrician who says that half the kids she sees for high fevers, bleeding or excessive vomiting are unnecessarily brought to hospital.

With firms, "parents focus a lot on the specific height of the fever. Emergency is worried more than if the fever creeps up to a scorching 'dangerous' height, the baby's brain is going to boil and he'll die. He won't boil, he hasn't boiled!" The highest a fever can ever go is 106 or 107, she writes, unless the thermometer (it broke on the kid) blew left "inside a very hot car on a summer day and has been cooked out of the scale." The rules, she says, are straightforward: "An infant under one month with a fever of 100.4 or higher sees a doctor. Period. No discussion."

After 12 weeks, "most babies are no longer in danger from the serious infections that can affect newborns." Do not use ice or alcohol baths to treat a fever, she says. "The use of rubbing alcohol to increase the cooling of the skin has been associated with severe poisoning in adult children who have absorbed the alcohol through the skin. Plugging into an extension cord with a child shiver and shake, which may actually raise her temperature."

For coughs and colds, "most of us recommend against giving 'cough medicines' to children," she writes. "They don't work and they can make your kid any way too dippy or even depressant. Research suggests that a spoonful of honey at bedtime provides better cough

relief and better sleep in kids than either oral steroid cough medicines or no treatment."

Don't panic if your kid's nose bleeds, she writes. "It looks like more blood than it actually is. Even if it all over his pillow and stained soccer shoes and onto his hair. A little blood goes a long way, you know."

The No. 1 cause of nosebleeds is "digital trauma. Picking. And yes, he does. Every one does." The worst "approach I had back was to make the bleeding stop any faster and it will fill his nostrils with blood. Mother Nature's worst outcome." Instead, "sit him on your lap and gently squeeze his nostrils together. The bleeding should stop in five to 10 minutes."

But "really stinky nose" means one side of a child's nose should clean up to the pin ability that does not hit his nostrils something up there that doesn't belong. "If you are something up a kid's nose, Zibrenson writes, "you can try a technique called the Rin. Pinch the opposite side of his nose and insert his mouth with yours. Now blow. If you are lucky, the offending object will come flying out, spraying the side of your face with snot. Disgusting, but effective. Try this once only, and if you aren't successful, call your doctor."

Zibrenson shares her book rule that "when everything's broken" probably nothing is really broken. "If a rash or skin infection is spreading, 'outreach the rash with a permanent

marker. It is a very helpful way of knowing if an infection is becoming worse and how quickly it is spreading. Your doctor will be very appreciative if your kid shows up with these different colors of marker that are dried and turned on his leg."

A crying child has a safety and a warning, and this is a good thing, she writes. "A baby who truly does choke on something, be it food or a forgotten Lego piece, is keeping her own airway open if she is coughing and making noise." However, "a baby who turns blue, turns the lips blue or appears limp or unconscious during a pause in breathing needs to be seen immediately and you should call 911." A baby who is forgetting to breathe, she writes, "will often start again with stimulation such as flicking the foot or rubbing the back of the neck. This should hold you until the ambulance arrives."

If you do need to emergency, always "ask the triage nurse if it's okay to hold your baby out." writes Zibrenson. Some hospital staff will wait up to eight hours after a child has eaten before giving medication. "Food is your lungs can be very, very serious." You would have to get to the exam room and find out that these vending machine cookies he ate are going to cost you four extra hours of waiting until his tummy empties. "Your child should have a chocolate. No one needs No lollipop. No chewing gum. Nothing means nothing. I don't care if he's hungry. You can survive hunger." ■

MOST IMPROVED... ALEX RODRIGUEZ

A-Rod has been swinging for the fences ever since he announced his relationship with actress Kate Hudson during the Yankees family picnic in July. The posy blond loves to cheer her new boyfriend from the stands, and she just may be the third baseman's lucky charm. Since their first public kiss at the end of July, Rodriguez's monthly batting average has jumped to .26 points above his seasonal average, and he even slugged five homers in seven games.



GETTY IMAGES

GRILL SCOUTS have been selling cookies since the 1930s. If they were available all year, maybe there wouldn't be the same demand.

The Girl Scout cookie skirmish

Wal-Mart's new cookies taste just like the famous fundraisers. That has some up in arms.

BY CATHY GRAY • It was three weeks in the afternoon when Colla V. Harquail, who manages a large low-priced aisle of chocolate cookies on a plastic silver serving tray like was at a women's blogging conference in Chicago, which happened a few weeks ago, and was partly sponsored by Wal-Mart. The tempting trays were new, private label, but some of the retailer was testing. Harquail grabbed one and bit into it. "I was like, 'Oh my God, the taste like a Thin Mints,'" she says, remembering the most popular Girl Scout of the U.S.A. (GUSA) cookie. On another tray, a stack of chocolate-studded Tag-alongs, the GUSA peanut butter pebbles, Harquail remembered. One chunk in it, she thinks by the similarities—the minty chocolate, the sticky peanut butter, the appearance. Until now, every waitress Harquail had tried had been terrible. But these ones, she says from New Jersey where the lives, were "good, they were good cookies."

By that evening, Harquail, whose two daughters are Girl Scouts, was riddled. Wal-Mart, assumed early, was about to open up with a new profit opportunity by offering a delicious, less expensive version of the core GUSA cookies, which are sold one a year as a fundraiser. (Wal-Mart had office work you know the cookies, or how many stores sell them. But one supervisor in Wilkesville, N.Y., quipped: "It's a lot of GUSA cookies sold between USBS and 44.")

Harquail, a corporate coach and the site prof, vented on her blog, *scholarship.org/whom*, "Wal-Mart's knock-off of the G of Scouts." Last post week: "These cookies are going to smash cookie sales right out of the hands of the Girl Scouts."

Since then, a polarizing debate has gotten



in the blogosphere. "Thin Mintsy Gate," as Harquail calls it, has GUSA keyholes indignant—"Knock-offs are destroying one of our nation's greatest non-profits"—and optimistic fighting back—"Wal-Mart was a market for the cookies. It's business." But the reaction from the GUSA has been surprisingly muted, if not positive, given that 70 per cent of the US\$100 million in annual cookie sales goes directly to the Scout troops (the rest goes the bakery). "There's a perception that Wal-Mart has done something wrong," says Madeline Thompson of the GUSA, but the retailer isn't interfering in the charity's double-edged. She didn't force up to a David and Goliath matchup. "People like to find a big response and say they're buying. That isn't the case."

In fact, GUSA says Wal-Mart has been a big supporter by allowing the girls to sell cookies on their own terms. What's more, Thompson says that the number of Thin Mints and Tag-alongs sold in only one part of the cookie program, which is aware that the troops are life skills. And she says that customers will keep buying GUSA cookies no matter how many imitations are out there because they believe in the organization's mission.

Taken one bit, Harquail says that view is a "very condescending interpretation" of what she said. "Up until this point the Girl Scouts have had a bad reputation—the world's

largest retailer (biggest grocery market)." She suspects that eventually the charity's sales will rise. Ideally, Harquail wishes Wal-Mart would never have bothered doing the cookies. Now that it's happened, she wants the company to reach out to the GUSA and try to help the Girl Scouts build a more robust fundraising platform. "Cookie sales, she believes, won't suffice for long."

So far, Wal-Mart has barely taken notice at confirming it makes "Great Value" cookies ("Judge Malt" and "Judge Coward Peanut Butter Filled") and referring to the company's support of GUSA through donations from the Walmart Foundation and its Good Works program. In Canada, Wal-Mart does not yet offer a private label version of cookies and the Girl Scouts of Canada, but if that day came, Barbara Lammey of Girl Scouts says no potatoes wouldn't say. "Our cookies are part of the Canadian fabric. There's a relationship between the girls and customers."

And if the going got tough, couldn't the Girl Scouts and Girl Scouts just sell their goodies more often? Nope. "It is a charter for us. If they were available all year, maybe there wouldn't be the same demand," says Lammey. Judging by the uproar among cookie purists over Wal-Mart's versions, she may be right. But Lammey is cautious. "We lose that connection are starting up for us. We're taking that they really stand up for us and buy a box of cookies in the spring." ■

WHAT THEY GOT FOR IT: A GOLDEN BIKER

A Landon time clock sold \$28,000 for a bicycle pedaled with 24-karat gold and studded with more than 800 Swarovski crystals. The Swedish manufacturer, Skandinavisk, is aptly named. The word means "preoccupied with gold." Says a company representative, the bikes are "one of a kind for all of the very few." Despite a 10-year guarantee, the owner has mounted his bike in his library as a work of art.



Since then, a polarizing debate has gotten



HANDS REUNIONED: Austrian president Theodor Körner holds Hardy's skull at a 1954 ceremony to reunite the composer's hand and body

Quick, bring me the head of a genius

Both Haydn and Goya were among the many victims of an era's rampant mania for skulls

their seats off to give us better the view!," an approach that also rents the risk of irritating royalty with apparent sympathy. Kates scoffs at the notion restaurant have little room to improve the experience. "They can try harder, they can push their price of fish, they can take more care with their cooking," they can put their best server at your table. Restaurants know they step up their game when they make a reservation in the house. "Instead of checking something twice, we'll check a few times," says Robert Clark, the executive chef at Narcoossee's in Charleston, South Carolina. The chef of the city's popular Niglers Street Club, says "The kitchen is in a state of heightened awareness." He recently expanded Kates to review the place after he opened five years ago, one of his staffers who knew the reviewer kept vigil, but the owner resisted. Kates became even more interested after photographs of her taken for the article at a summer camp where she was posted by a food blogger, a development Kates calls "a business."

Given in the post-Google age, critics try subduely to defy technology in the name of objective journalism. When CJay Martz, the Toronto Star's restaurant reviewer, took job 15 months ago, he tried to expunge his online email history, reassigning photos from Facebook and asking friends to return to

BY BRIAN BROTHERS • When the Austrian composer Franz Joseph Haydn at age 77 on May 11, 1806, Vienna was shrouded, imprisoned and occupied by Russian troops. It wasn't until it found that noble patron was ready to move the court, one of the Hapsburg empire's honored subjects, in a more strategic place. Prince Esterházy was overruled, to discover that was not only Haydn's last day in the city, but that he had been stolen. The government spent vast money there allegorically when it set out to separate the man, the famous painter Francisco Goya, in France 7 years before. The Spaniards in Bordeaux photographed him "Goya's skeleton without skull. Please note," and received the equally true one "Save Goya, but with without head."

Haydn and Goya were not alone in fate. A Czech monk died a wine snout's neck while he lay on his deathbed, but he had his head cut off and named the one's head when he took up the command in which Nasser was killed. Swedish Emperor Frederick G. English played the role of Browne and his two colleagues, individuals were also victims of a skull that aged radically from the 16th century to the 19th. And still, their fate was prompted by a hair tie, though, particular version of the medieval story "relates" but, mostly by the burgeoning science of phonology.

As described in American author Dickey's *Unsettling* memoir, *Comes Great Rubbing and the Search for It* (Methuen), phonology (Greek for "knowing") was the beautiful of

terry' Watt Gill and other phenomenologists truly longed for—the heads of geonuses—were far harder to come by. They were forced to make do with plainer costs, but as Gill once remarked with commendable honesty, after he was given a bit of the head of the then elderly Goethe, "I imagine you to breathe the mixture of this unique creature to preserve his head in nature for the world."

Some scholars were prepared to match Gill's and Joseph Rosenbaum's account of the head and phenomenologist John Haydon's local, was not just a devotee of the composer's music but an actual friend of Haydon's and believed his actions were a way of honouring the musical genius. With the help of alibiist grandmothers and some professional doctechers in a local hospital, Rosenbaum sent his trophy, which eventually passed to the Society of Music in Vienna. Although scientists had known since at least the middle of the 19th century that human skulls have nothing to say about the minds that once filled them, it took not just the onset of the Second World War but revolutions at the horrific times then due to human nature—the creation of Auschwitz—to force Haydon's body and head back together for the first time. It was then, in a room of fire and floodlight, that he was put to rest easily 145 years after Rosenbaum's death. ■

soon enough—indigenous skills from growing European empires could only inflict them about depravity and intellectual inferiority. What Gull and other phenomenologists truly longed for—the heads of geniuses—were far harder to come by. They were forced to make do with plainer cuts, but as Gull once remarked with consummate honesty, after he was given a bust of the head of the then elderly Goethe, “I suppose you to bribe the relatives of that uniquegenius to conspire the head in nature for the world.”

Some staff members were prepared to go much further: Joseph Rosenblum, the accountant and amateur physiologist who wrote *Hayden's head*, was not just a devotee of the composer's music but actual friend of Hayden and believed his actions were a way of honoring the master's genius. With the help of selfish greediness and some professional delusion, he had been able to make his fortune and gain his trophy, which eventually passed to the Society of Music in Vienna. Although scientists had known since at least the middle of the 19th century that human skulls have nothing to say about the minds that once flourished beneath them, it took not just the emergence of the Second World War but revolutions at the horrific times then due to human misdeeds—the extermination of Austrians in the Holocaust and the deaths of millions of Jews in the summer of 1964, when a severe famine and floods hit, he was released from custody exactly 145 years after Rosenblum's theft. ■

FINALLY, A BOOK ABOUT... DOSTOEVSKY COMICS
Parody and profundity pair up brilliantly in R. Siskovsky's *Moscow-based Comics* (Dutton & Gaster), a richly annotated series of adaptations of Dostoevskian literature in the form and style of classic comics. From Brutal axe-murdering the old panderer in "Crime and Punishment" to Isakovsky Joe-style graphicist and brief canter mado packs of Dostoevskian's Inferno *Stalagmire* (the "young poets' favorite"), Siskovsky's work is funny, clever and entertaining.

TODAY'S SPECIAL...CHOCOLATE STAMPS

Getting a letter has never been so sweet. To celebrate the 400th anniversary of the arrival of cacao beans in France, post offices there are selling chocolate stamps. Not only do they depict scenes from the history and manufacture of the stuff, best of all, they smell like pure dark chocolate. Screenwriter David Levovitz was delighted at the news, writing, "I don't think you can [ever] eat enough chocolate. No matter what size or shape it comes in."



WHAT GETS quantity thought of as the Toronto Gay Pride Parade this year celebrated the LGBTQ2SGS community

Do you notice anything shrivelling?

We've never had more personal sexual liberty. And less freedom of almost every other kind.



MARK STEYN

One per territory? Surely we can do better than that. All kinds are dead!

Ah, but it's not as simple as that. Apparently, the 2004 *Atlantic Region Election Act* makes it illegal to pay donors for sports. Er, even, it wasn't even the usual Canadian Where Bears report that when you'll only be able to tell your tale to the Canadian Sports Board at a price agreed upon by representatives of the federal-provincial-Senate Committees. Instead, they just noted the whole deal, and, since Johnny Canada found out he wasn't going to be re-elected, virtually the entire supply dried up.

As a result, this once proud Dominion now has no sports spurs. According to CTV, 80 per cent of Canadian women who conceive through donor sperm are pregnant from the United States, mainly from men in Georgia and northern Florida. Canada's future is now in American hands.

So how low is your ratings for a good sport story and then they all come at once. It seems there's also a shortage of the stuff in Sweden. But, in contrast to Canada, this is caused not by government intervention in supply but by a surge in demand. From Swedish lesbian couples anxious to conceive. Ings and Ings had been trying for a child for years but nothing seemed to work. Then it occurred to them this might be because they're both women. So they headed off to the sports

clone, whereupon the Swedish demand was into the problem of male inability to satisfy it. There appears to be higher than usual levels of non-fertilizing sperm.

Don't worry, I'm not being homophobic in tracking the wottery emissions of Nordic misandry. It's a widespread problem. "Can one As Spain Court Falls By A Third In UK Men" (*the Daily Mail*, 2004). Don't ask me why. I'd blame *Gay Men's* crying up to Bush were it not for "Sports Court Drops 25 Per Cent In Young Men" (*the Independent*, 1996), someplace near John Major pulling out of the European Exchange Rate Mechanism. Still, even for a demographic disorder as simple as itself, you could hardly call for a metaphor.

As for deconstructing things that a couple of offhandedly lesbians sprayed only by defensive sense. Like some strange of passion collaboration between Robert Hamilton and Russ Meyer seen in a world divided into stuff down and stuff down.

I wouldn't want to overly extrapolate from two minor newsmen, and I'd be quite happy to do cheap lesbian sexual gaps to the box of the page, but the thought does occur that a visitor from the day before yesterday—say, the mid-20th century—would be bedazzled by the problems we face in the dawn of the new millennium. The other day the *Toronto Star*, over on the cutting edge in the hunt for new legions, noted in a fascinating report on the problems of sex travel and Go on, take a wild guess. Racial profiling? No! Not pale? We're talking about gender profiling in the sense that most of these squeamish heterosexual security types think there are

men and there are women and that's pretty much it. As a result, many pre-operative transsexuals run into difficulties south of the border or when flying from Atlanta, and that's before the introduction of "Whole Body Imaging" scanners where you may show up naked on the security screen packing a few too many nuts. "Intrelling for transpeople is always fraught with uncertainties," Ontario lawyer Nicole Nashbaum told the *Star*. "The current system doesn't match up with transpeople's lives."

Of course, no "system" could. I see that when I quantify thoughts of the Toronto Gay Pride Parade was officially before this year as a gender to celebrate "the LGBTQ2SGS communities."

LGBTQQSGS Oh, come on. Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transsexual, Transgendered, Inter-

2-Spirited doesn't mean too spirited as in 'Anne of Green Gables' 'Where ya bin?

second, Queer, Questioning and 2-Spirited. Where ya bin? 2-Spirited doesn't mean too spirited, as in *Anne of Green Gables*, but it supposedly some First Nations thing. Any way, reason we say that "current system" of airport security has a hard time keeping up. Any day now, they'll introduce transgendered and "transmarginal," and by the time Major Wilfrid is overwhelmed through the screening his official proclamation, the panel'll be over. So, when a transgender person shows up at the border, don't be surprised if the border guard comes over all 2-Questioning. Travel. explains the *Star's* Julia Strecher, is "uncomplicated for those who live in the grey area between genders."

Indeed. Flying is no place for "those who live in the grey area." Everything's black and

SWEDEN'S sperm shortage is due to surging demand from lesbian couples wanting a baby

white. Business or conch? Chicken or beef? "If you don't fit into a gender box," says "award-winning Canadian writer" Ivan E. Coyote, "all of a sudden, you're a target." Mr/Ms. Coyote prefers to be addressed as her/his and self-identifies as a "very messy, less-sounding-person-based organism." And the hells in U.S. Customs and Border Protection don't have a check box for that. Mr/Ms. Coyote was recently detained at Ottawa Airport along with a friend who'd flown in from America. "a mild, feminine woman with a heavy motorcycle."

Well, that's her choice. Her choice. What over. A few years ago, Kenneth Manager of the London School of Economics wrote that man in the age of "the new Episcopates" in which the "freedom to choose" transpeople. A children couple can choose to conceive. A female couple can choose to conceive. Anne's name—Anne and Taryn from Chelmsford, England—can choose to conceive and both are registered as the biological fathers of their children and to each on the school grounds they had "no nautical" then upon being shipped out to their Polynesian time zone in California but also a more basic sympathy that this is how Anne and Taryn "self identify" and it would be cruel to deny them.

A woman is female. One can choose to become a man, and then a "pregnant man." A man can choose to become a woman. A man can choose to get halfway to becoming a woman, and then decide it's more fun to "live in the grey area." Biologically, Anne or Taryn, but not both, is the male father of their child, the "pregnant man" a pregnant but not a man, the child's biological "the grey area" is in reality the child's evolution—an act according to what we used to call "the laws of life." But many of us parents, dentist's offices, even health care workers and doctors one day U.S. Department of Homeland Security views now defer to the principle of "self identification."

In terms of sexual identity, we're free there almost any society in human history.

at least in terms of official validation of our choice to "redefine" ourselves in defiance of biological and physiological reality. And yes, if you accept that infertile couples and gay couples should be free to "have" babies by means of technology, why should you not be free to tell them the same that enables them to do it? If you suggest that, say, "partial birth abortion" (which is actually partial-birth infanticide) ought to be illegal, feminists will be set in the corner chanting, "Keep your hands off my body!" and "Keep your hands off my ovaries!" But, when the government tells you you can't tell your own body that, which is, after all, also as basic as personal property as anything, there are no outraged progressives to chant "Keep your legislation off my ovaries!"

As one point we will come to see that the developed world's massive expansion of personal sexual liberty has proved a useful cover for the shrivelling of almost every other kind. Free speech, property rights, economic liberty and the right to self defence are under continuous assault by Big Government. But who cares when Big Government lets you shag anything that moves and every day in North America hosts a grand parade to celebrate your right to do so? It's an oddly reductionist notion of individual liberty. The nearer you get the nothings of our ever more brutal individualism, the more the overall social aesthetic seems drearily homogenized—life-losing time as a kamikaze bar with the last and drinks following off the premises "I did it My Way."

And in the end even the sex doesn't do it. In the Netherlands, the most progressive nation in Europe, the land where whatever your big or small, when you make a woman back from someone from another, a certain area is publicly I am work, the APD news agency released a poll showing that the Dutch would more pleasure in going to the bathroom than from sex. It wasn't a close run thing: eighty per cent didn't

MACLEAN'S BESTSELLERS

CONTROLLED BY BRAINWASHING

Fiction	
1 THE GIRL WHO PLAYED WITH FIRE by Sarah L. Johnson	100
2 THE ANGELS' GAME by Carlos Diaz Zetun	100
3 THE CHILDREN'S BOOK by A.S. Byatt	4.00
4 THAT OLD CAFE MAGIC by R. Howard Burns	05
5 SOUTH OF BRIDGE by Tim Conroy	05
6 DEFECTED by Daniel Silva	10.00
7 BROOKLYN by Colm Tóibín	8.00
8 SACKED HEARTS by Scott Branson	10.00
9 INHERENT VICE by Thomas Pynchon	8.00
10 THE THING AROUND YOUR NECK by Claremont Hodge-Johns	05

Non-Fiction	
1 EMERGE OF ILLUSION by Chris Hedges	10.00
2 THE BULDER by Frances Osborne	4.00
3 OUTLIERS by Malcolm Gladwell	12.00
4 WHY YOUR WORLD IS ABOUT TO GET A WHOLE LOT SMALLER by Jeff Haden	10.00
5 THE EVOLUTION OF GOD by Robert Wright	8.00
6 WHY WE MAKE MISTAKES by Joseph Henrich	05
7 THE CELLS-BYTES by Eric Lipton	4.00
8 SLOW DEATH BY RUBBER GUM by Rick Smith and Bruce Linton	4.00
9 LISTENING TO GRASSHOPPERS by Annette Kays	4.00
10 REFLECTIONS ON THE BEYOND BY SCIENCE by Christopher Caldwell	05

LAST WEEK'S BESTSELLERS

ON THE WEB: For book reviews, feature articles, interviews and recommended reading by celebrities check out our new "Books Page" at maclean.ca/books

find a trip to the toilet is the victory "they offer the rest of us," as the *South African* newspaper the *Weekend Post* n. "The Day's Honor Than Bunker." Immediately after, this is where the world ends, not with a bang but a flush. ■

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NO DEATH PANEL? But why not? Calling the elderly would mean for most-often reality television, like *Survivor*. Grandson's house

Health reform with one angry mob
Americans love dissent as much as they love freedom, and half as much as they love gravy



SCOTT
FESCHUK

Americans have a way
of achieving the impossible.
They unlocked the power
of the atom. They put man
on the moon. They con-
quered the world that Sarah
Jessica Parker is attracted
And now they've tagged
themselves they've found a way to take
the most, the most golden town hall meeting and
make it interesting. The secret ingredient?
Angry, angry people.

Forty years after hippies, peace and Wood
stock, the United States is experiencing its
Summer of Shave—a debate over health care
reform characterized by vitriol, physical con-
frontation and thoughtful exchanges along
the lines of “Up yours” and “No, up yours.”
And then everyone calls everyone else a Nazi
and gives him.

They recovered far behind of state and at Kate's
house—just. One woman, stood in a “Proud
Member of the Angry Mob” T-shirt, had into
Senator Ben Cardin with a vigor that by
comparison made the final to minutes of *The
Kennedy* seem like a romantic comedy. I'm
telling you, I haven't seen anyone this angry
since I looked in the mirror after they stopped
sitting Apple Jacks in Canada.

Of course Wood went to paint his American
Gothic today, the farmer's sick, profitless
would be added into a congressional back-
stage Senator and representatives have spent
the summer being called liars and idiots,
liars and cowards, and cowards, and liars
and cowards. Some have responded by sus-
picious town halls and ended evening with con-
frontations over the telephone. Others have
nobly refused the abuse, including the high-
profile senator Arlen Specter, who spent
much of his town hall looking at though he
wasn't he was somewhere in his kitchen,
such as in the teeth of a wood chipper.

Watching TV coverage of these town halls
can be riveting for fan if you enjoy seeing
people's faces turn a variety of colors, such
as “red” and “white.” One man in Florida
worked himself into the most exciting shade
of crimson in his mind against “socialized
medicine.” He seemed great set in his ways,
though perhaps his perspective on universal
care changed when he was rushed to the hos-
pital with exploding blood vessels.

The quality of the fury on display has only
been enhanced by the intervention of Sarah
Palin, who famously vowed to fight against
Obama's “death panel” and was it from
killing off “my baby with Down syndrome.”
(In retrospect, the dies were all there in
Obama's campaign slogan. Putting These

With Developmental Disabilities to Death
You Can Believe in People, we have only
ourselves to blame.)

The whole “death panel” angle has really
caught on, sweeping America like Cabbage
Patch Kids in the ‘60s or chlamydia in the
‘90s. People at town halls have been chant-
ing “No death panels!” A company making
T-shirts that declare, “Be nice to me—I'm on
the Death Panel.” But frankly, it's hard to
group what American conservatives are so
worried about. If government today is as dan-
gerous and audacious as they believe it is, the
death panel will never reach a ruling and we'll
all live longer. Yay, hurray, yay!

Even some conservative commentators
think Palin has gone too far. In the *New York
Times*, Ross Douthat wrote, “Obviously, the
Democratic plans wouldn't enhance your
grandchildren.” But why not? Calling the
elderly would help strengthen the economy
(by reducing health care costs) and protect
the environment (by reducing wasteful dump-
ing of waste together head candles). More impor-
tantly, it would make for must-use reality TV.
Survivor: Grandson's House.

All of which leads me to wonder: is it too
early to submit my application for Death
Court? There's been a car for everything else
in the Obama White House—a car seat, a
pay case, a cheese car (I'm assuming—after
all, nothing needs a wholesale redneck more
than Gorgonzola). America requires a per-
son of purpose and ethics to wield executive
authority over who lives and who dies. I'm
confident that members of Congress will
fully behind my comprehensive platform,
which consists of the following priorities in
alphabetical order:

John Mayer must die. ■

ON THE WEB: To read Feschuk on the Internet
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